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Sir

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BLACKWELL'S

Doris
Prof. Nichols

RECORDS OF LATER LIFE.

RECORDS OF LATER LIFE.

BY

FRANCES ANNE KEMBLE,

AUTHOR OF "RECORD OF A GIRLHOOD."

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

SECOND EDITION.



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RECORDS OF LATER LIFE.

Butler Place, March 1st, 1840.

Thank you, my dearest Harriet, for your extract from my sister's letter to you. . . . The strongest of us are insufficient to ourselves in this life, and if we will not stretch out our hands for help to our fellows, who, for the most part, are indeed broken reeds and quite as often pierce as support us, we needs must at last stretch them out to God; and doubtless these occasions, bitter as they may seem, should be accounted blest, which make the poor proud human soul discover its own weakness and God's all-sufficiency. . . .

My winter—or rather, what remains of it—is like to pass in uninterrupted quiet and solitude; and you will probably have the satisfaction of receiving many *short* letters from me, for I know not where I shall find the material for long ones. To be sure, S——'s sayings and F——'s looks might furnish me with something to say, but I have a dread of beginning to

talk about my children, for fear I should never leave off, for that is apt to be a "story without an end."

I hear they are going to bestow upon my father, on his return to England, a silver vase, valued at several hundred pounds. I am base-minded, dear Harriet, grovelling, and sordid; and were I he, would rather have a shilling's worth of honour, and the rest of the vase in hard cash: but he has lived his life upon this sort of thing, and I think with great pleasure of the great pleasure it will give him. I am very well, and always most affectionately yours,

F. A. B.

Butler Place, March 12th, 1840.

DEAREST HARRIET,

It is only a few days since I received your letter with the news of Mr. F——'s attack, from which it is but natural to apprehend that he may not recover. . . . The combination of the loss of one's father, and of the home of one's whole life, is indeed a severe trial; though in this case, the one depending on the other, and Mr. F——'s age being so advanced, Emily with her steadfast mind has probably contemplated the possibility of this event, and prepared herself for it, as much as preparation may be made against affliction, which, however long looked for, when it comes always seems to bring with it some unforeseen element of harsh surprise. We never can imagine what will happen to us, precisely as it *does* happen to us; and overlook in anticipation, not only minute mitigations, but small stings of aggravation, quite incalculable till they are experienced. . . . I

could cry to think that I shall never again see the flowerbeds and walks and shrubberies of Bannisters. I think there is something predominantly material in my nature, for the sights and sounds of outward things have always been my chiefest source of pleasure; and as I grow older this in nowise alters; so little so, that gathering the first violets of the spring the other morning, it seemed to me that they were things to *love* almost more than creatures of my own human-kind. I do not believe I am a normal human being; and at my death, only *half a soul* will pass into a spiritual existence, the other half will go and mingle with the winds that blow, and the trees that grow, and the waters that flow, in this world of material elements. . . .

Do I remember Widmore, you ask me. Yes, truly. . . . I remember the gay colours of the flowerbeds, and the fine picturesque trees in the garden, and the shady quietness of the ground-floor rooms. . . .

You ask me how I have replaced Margery. Why, in many respects, if indeed not in all, very indifferently; but I could not help myself. Her leaving me was a matter of positive necessity, and some things tend to reconcile me to her loss. I believe she would have made S—— a Catholic. The child's imagination had certainly received a very strong impression from her; and soon after her departure, as I was hearing S—— her prayers, she begged me to let her repeat that prayer to "the blessed Virgin," which her nurse had taught her. I consider this a direct breach of faith on the part of Margery, who had once before undertaken similar instructions in spite of distinct

directions to interfere in no way with the child's religious training.

The proselytizing spirit of her religion was, I suppose, stronger than her conscience, or rather, was the predominant element in it, as it is in all very devout Catholics; and the opportunity of impressing my little girl with what she considered vital truth, not to be neglected; and upon this ground alone I am satisfied that it is better she should have left me, for though it would not mortally grieve me if hereafter my child were conscientiously to embrace Romanism, I have no desire that she should be educated in what I consider erroneous views upon the most momentous of all subjects.

I have been more than once assured, on good authority, that it is by no means an infrequent practice of the Roman Catholic Irish women employed as nurses in American families, to carry their employers' babies to their own churches and have them baptized, of course without consent or even knowledge of their parents. The secret baptism is duly registered, and the child thus smuggled into the pope's fold, never, if possible, entirely lost sight of by the priest who administered the regenerating sacrament to it. The saving of souls is an irresistible motive, especially when the saving of one's own is much facilitated by the process.

The woman I have in Margery's place is an Irish Protestant, a very good and conscientious girl, but most woefully ignorant, and one who murders our luckless mother tongue after a fashion that almost maddens me. However, as with some cultivation, education,

reading, reflection, and that desire to do what is best that a mother alone can feel for her own child, I cannot but be conscious of my own inability in all points to discharge this great duty, the inability of my nursery-maid does not astonish or dismay me. The remedy for the nurse's deficiencies must be in *me*, and the remedy for mine in God, to whose guidance I commit myself and my darlings. . . . Margery was very anxious to remain with me as my maid; but we have reduced our establishment, and I have no longer any maid of my own, therefore I could not keep her. . . .

With regard to attempting to make "reason the guide of your child's actions," that, of course, must be a very gradual process, and may, in my opinion, be tried too early. Obedience is the first virtue of which a young child is capable, the first duty it can perform; and the authority of a parent is, I think, the first impression it should receive,—a strictly reasonable and just claim, inasmuch as, furnishing my child with all its means of existence, as well as all its amusements and enjoyments, regard for my requests is the proper and only return it can make in the absence of sufficient judgment, to decide upon their propriety, and the motives by which they are dictated.

Good-bye, dearest Harriet.

I am ever affectionately yours,

F. A. B.

Butler Place, March 16th, 1840.

MY DEAREST HARRIET,

It was with infinite pain that I received your last letter [a very unfavourable report, almost a

sentence of death, had been pronounced by the physicians upon my friend's dearest friend, Miss Dorothy Wilson], and yet I know not, except your sorrow, what there is so deplorable in the fact that Dorothy, who is one of the living best prepared for death, should have received a summons, which on first reading of it shocked me so terribly.

We calculate most blindly, for the most part, in what form the call to "change our life" may be least unwelcome; but to one whose eyes have long been steadily fixed upon that event, I do not believe the manner of their death signifies much.

Pain, our poor human bodies shrink from; and yet it has been endured, almost as if unfelt, not only in the triumphant death of the mob-hunted martyr, but in the still, lonely, and, by all but God, unseen agony of the poor and humble Christian, in those numerous cases where persecution indeed was not, but the sorrowful trial of the neglect and careless indifference of their fellow-beings, the total absence of all sympathy—a heavy desolation whether in life or death.

I have just lost a friend, Dr. Follen, a man to whose character no words of mine could do justice. He has been publicly mourned from more than one Christian pulpit; and Dr. Channing, in a discourse after his death, has spoken of him as one whom "many thought the most perfect man they ever knew." Among those many I was one. I have never seen any one whom I revered, loved, and admired more than I did Dr. Follen. He perished, with above a hundred others, in a burning steam-boat, on the Long Island Sound; at night, and in mid-winter, the freezing waters

affording no chance of escape to the boldest swimmer or the most tenacious clinger to existence. He perished in the very flower of vigorous manhood, cut off in the midst of excellent usefulness, separated, *for the first time*, from a most dearly loved wife and child, who were prevented from accompanying him by sickness. In a scene of indescribable terror, confusion, and dismay, that noble and good man closed his life; and all who have spoken of him has said, "Could one have seen his countenance, doubtless it was to the last the mirror of his serene and steadfast spirit;" and for myself, after the first shock of hearing of that awful calamity, I could only think it mattered not how or where that man met his death. He was always near to God, and who can doubt that, in that scene of apparent horror and despair, God was very near to him?

Even so, my dearest Harriet, do I now think of the impending fate of Dorothy; but oh, the difference between the sudden catastrophe in the one case, and the foreknowledge granted in the other! Time, whose awful uses our blind security so habitually forgets, is granted to her, with its inestimable value marked on it by the finger of death, undimmed by the busy hands of earthly pursuits and interests; she has, and will have, her dearest friends and lovers about her to the very end; and I know of no prayer that I should frame for her, but exemption from acute pain. For you, my dearest Harriet, if pain and woe and suffering are appointed you, it is to some good purpose, and you may make it answer its best ends.

These seem almost cold-hearted words, and yet

God knows from how warm a heart, full of love and aching with sympathy, I write them ! But sorrow is His angel, His minister, His messenger who does His will, waiting upon our souls with blessed influences. My only consolation, in thinking upon your affliction, is to remember that all events are ordered by our Father, and to reflect, as I often do——

I had written thus far, dearest Harriet, when a miserable letter from Georgia came to interrupt me. How earnestly, in the midst of the tears through which I read it, I had to recall those very thoughts, in my own behalf, which I was just urging upon you, you can imagine. . . .

We may not choose our own discipline ; but happy are they who are called to suffer themselves, rather than to see those they love do so ! . . .

My head aches, and my eyes ache, and my heart aches, and I cannot muster courage to write any more. God bless you, my dearest Harriet. Remember me most affectionately to dear Dorothy, and

Believe me ever yours,

F. A. B.

Dr. Charles Follen, known in his own country as Carl Follenius, became an exile from it for the sake of his political convictions, which in his youth he had advocated with a passionate fervour that made him, even in his college days, obnoxious to its governing authorities. He wrote some fine spirited Volkslieder that the students approved of more than the masters ; and was so conspicuous in the vanguard of liberal opinion, that the Vaterland became an unwholesome

residence for him, and he emigrated to America, where all his aspirations towards enlightened freedom found "elbow room."

He became an ordained Unitarian preacher; and it was a striking tribute to his spirit of humane tolerance as well as to his eloquent advocacy of his own high spiritual faith, that he was once earnestly and respectfully solicited to give a series of discourses upon Christianity, to a society of intelligent men who professed themselves disbelievers in it (atheists, materialists, for aught I know), inasmuch as from him they felt sure of a powerful, clear, and earnest exposition of his own opinions, unalloyed by uttered or implied condemnation of them for differing from him. I do not know whether Dr. Follen complied with this petition, but I remember his saying how much he had been touched by it, and how glad he should be to address such a body of mis- or disbelievers. He was a man of remarkable physical vigour, and excelled in all feats of strength and activity, having, when first he came to Boston, opened a gymnasium for the training of the young Harvard scholars in such exercises. He had the sensibility and gentleness of a woman, the imagination of a poet, and the courage of a hero; a genial kindly sense of humour, and buoyant elastic spirit of joyousness, that made him, with his fine intellectual and moral qualities, an incomparable friend and teacher to the young, for whose rejoicing vitality he had the sympathy of fellowship as well as the indulgence of mature age, and whose enthusiasm he naturally excited to the highest degree.

His countenance was the reflection of his noble nature. My intercourse with him influenced my life while it lasted, and long after his death the thought of what would have been approved or condemned by him affected my actions.

Many years after his death, I was speaking of him to Wæleker, the Nestor of German professors, the most learned of German philologists, historians, archæologists, and antiquarians, and he broke out into enthusiastic praise of Follen, who had been his pupil at Jena, and to whose mental and moral worth he bore, with deep emotion, a glowing testimony.

Butler Place, March 23rd, 1840.

I have just learned, dearest Harriet, that the Censorship [office of licenser of plays] has been transferred from my father to my brother John, which I am very glad to hear, as I imagine, though I do not know it, that the death of Mr. Beaumont must have put an end to the existence of the *British and Foreign Review*, for which he employed my brother as editor.

If the salary of licenser is an addition to the income attached to his editorship of the *Review*, my brother will be placed in comfortable circumstances; and I hope this may prove to be the case—though ladies are not apt to be so in love with abstract political principles as to risk certain thousands every year merely to promote their quarterly illustration in a *Review*, and I shall not be at all surprised to learn that Mrs. Beaumont declines doing so any longer.

[Mrs. Wentworth Beaumont, mother of my brother

John's friend, must have been a woman of very decided political opinions, and very liberal views of the value of her convictions—in hard cash. Left the widowed mistress of a princely estate in Yorkshire, on the occasion when the most passionate contest recorded in modern electioneering made it doubtful whether the Government candidate or the one whose politics were more in accordance with her own would be returned to Parliament, she, then a very old lady, drove in her travelling-carriage with four horses to Downing Street, and demanding to see the Prime Minister, with whom she was well acquainted, accosted him thus: "Well, my lord, are you quite determined to make your man stand for *our* seat?" "Yes, Mrs. Beaumont, I think quite determined." "Very well," replied the lady; "I am on my way down to Yorkshire, with eighty thousand pounds in the carriage for my man. Try and do better than that."

I am afraid the *pros* and *cons* for Woman's Suffrage would alike have thought that very expensive female partisan politician hardly to be trusted with the franchise. Lord Dacre, who told me that anecdote, told me also that on one occasion forty thousand pounds, to his knowledge, had been spent by Government on a contested election—I think he said at Norwich.] . . .

The longer I live, the less I think of the importance of any or all outward circumstances, and the more important I think the original powers and dispositions of people submitted to their influence. God has permitted no situation to be exempt from trial and temptation, and few, if any, to be entirely exempt

from good influences and opportunities for using them. The tumult of the inward creature may exist in the midst of the calmest outward daily life, and the peace which passeth understanding subsist in the turmoil of the most adverse circumstances. . . . Our desires tending towards particular objects, we naturally seek the position most favourable for obtaining them; and, stand where we will, we are still, if we so choose, on the heavenward road. If we know how barely responsible for what they are many human beings necessarily must be, how much better does God know it! With many persons, whose position we regret and think unfortunate for their character, we might have to go far back, and retrace in the awful influence of inheritance the source of the evils we deplore in them. We need have much faith in the future to look hopefully at the present, and perfect faith in the mercy of our Father in heaven, who alone knows how much or how little of His blessed light has reached every soul of us through precept and example. . . .

You ask me of Margery's successor: she is an honest, conscientious, and most ignorant Irish Protestant. You cannot conceive of what materials our households are composed here. The Americans, whose superior intelligence and education make them by far the most desirable servants we could have, detest the condition of domestic service so utterly, that it is next to impossible to procure them, and absolutely impossible to retain them above a year. The lowest order of Irish are the only persons that can be obtained. They offer themselves, and are accepted of hard neces-

sity, indiscriminately, for any situation in a house, from that of lady's-maid to that of cook; and, indeed, they are equally unfit for all, having probably never seen so much as the inside of a decent house till they came to this country. To illustrate—my housemaid is the sister of my present nursery-maid, and on the occasion of the latter taking her holiday in town, the other had the temporary charge of the children, and, when first she undertook it, had to be duly enlightened as to the toilet purposes of a wash-hand basin, a sponge, and a tooth-brush, not one of which had she apparently been familiar with before; and this would have been the case with a large proportion of the Irish girls who present themselves here to be engaged as our servants.

Our household has been reduced for some time past, and I have no maid of my own; and when the nurse is in town I am obliged to forego the usual decency of changing my dress for dinner, from the utter incapacity of my housemaid to fasten it upon my back. Of course, except tolerably faithful washing, dressing, and bodily care, I can expect nothing for my children from my present nurse. She is a very good and pious girl, and though her language is nothing short of heathen Greek, her sentiments are very much those of a good Christian. This same service is a source of considerable daily tribulations, and I wish I only improved all my opportunities of practising patience and forbearance. . . .

F. A. B.

Butler Place, March 25th, 1840.

MY DEAR T——,

I have been reading with infinite interest the case of the *Amistad*; but understand, from Mrs. Charles Sedgwick, that there is to be an appeal upon the matter. As however the result will, I presume, be the same, the more publicity the affair obtains, the more it and all kindred subjects are discussed, spoken of, thought on, and written about, the better for us unfortunate slaveholders.

I am very much obliged to you for sending me that article on Mr. Jay's book. You know how earnestly I look to every sign of the approaching termination of this national disgrace and individual misfortune; and when men of ability and character conscientiously raise their voices against it, who can be so faint-hearted as not to have faith in its ultimate downfall.

Your very name pledges you in some sort to this cause, and, among your other important duties, let me (who am now involuntarily implicated in this terrible abuse) beg you to remember that this one is an inheritance; and for the sake of those, justly honoured, who have bequeathed it to you, discharge it with the ability nature has so bountifully endowed you with, and you cannot fail to accomplish great good.

In reading your article, I was much reminded of Legget, whose place, it seems to me, there is none but you to fill.

I have just been interrupted by a letter from Elizabeth, confirming the news of your sister's return from Europe. I congratulate you heartily upon the

termination of your anxieties about her. Remember me most kindly to her, and to your mother, if my message can be made acceptable to her in her present affliction, and believe me

Ever yours most truly,
F. A. B.

The *Amistad* was a low raking schooner, conveying between fifty and sixty negroes, fresh from Africa, from Havannah to Guamapah, Port Principe, to the plantation of one of the passengers. The captain and three of the crew were murdered by the negroes. Two planters were spared to navigate the vessel back to Africa. Forced to steer east all day, these white men steered west and north all night; and after two months, coming near New London, the schooner was captured by the United States schooner *Washington*, and carried into port, where a trial was held by the Circuit Court at Hertford, transferred to the District Court, and sent by appeal to the United States Supreme Court. The District Court decreed that one man, not of the recent importation, should, by the treaty of 1795, with Spain, be restored to his master; the rest, delivered to the President of the United States, to be by him transported to their homes in Africa.

Before the case could come before the United States Supreme Court, the President (Mr. Van Buren), upon the requisition of the Spanish minister, had the negroes conveyed, by the United States schooner *Grampus*, back to Havannah and to slavery, under the treaty of 1795.

The case created an immense excitement among

the friends and foes of slavery. The point made by the counsel for the negroes being that they were not slaves, but free Africans, freshly brought to Cuba, contrary to the latest enacted laws of Spain. The schooner *Amistad* started on her voyage to Africa in June, 1839, reached New London in August, and was sent back in January, 1840.

Butler Place, April 5th, 1840.

DEAREST HARRIET,

I have received both your letters concerning Dorothy's health. The one which you sent by the *British Queen*, came before one you previously wrote me from Liverpool, and destroyed all the pleasure I should have received from the cheerful spirit in which the latter was written.

I was reading the other evening a sermon of Dr. Channing's, suggested by the miserable destruction of a steam-boat with the loss of upwards of a hundred lives; among them, one precious to all who knew him perished, a man who, I think, had few equals, and to whose uncommon character all who ever knew him bear witness.

The fate of so excellent a human being, cut off in the flower of his age, in the midst of a career of uncommon worth and usefulness, inspired Dr. Channing, who was his dear friend, with one of the finest discourses in which Christian faith ever "justified the ways of God to Man."

In reading that eloquent sermon, so full of hope, of trust, of resignation, and rational acknowledgment of the great purposes of sorrow, my thoughts turned to you,

ing the summer at the English lakes]. I am writing pretty late at night, but if the Sedgwicks whom you know, and those who, through them, know you, were round me, I should have *showers* of love to send you from them: your rainy lake country suggested that image, but that would be a *warm* shower, which you don't get in Westmoreland. I am growing very fat, but at the present there is no fatty degeneracy of the heart, so that I still remain

Affectionately yours,

F. A. B.

Lenox, Massachusetts, August 28th, 1840.

MY DEAR LADY DACRE,

I have always considered your writing to me a very unmerited kindness towards one who had so little claim on your time and attention; and I need not tell you how much this feeling is increased by your present state of mind, and the effort I am sure it must be to you to remember one so far off, in the midst of your great sorrow [for the death of her daughter, Mrs. Sullivan]. . . . I shall come alone to England; and this is the more dismal, that I have it in prospect to go down to Naples to join my father and sister, and stay with them till her engagements there and at Palermo are ended. This journey (once my vision by day and dream by night) will lose much of its delight by being a solitary pilgrimage to the long-desired Italy. I think of pressing one of my brothers into my service as escort; or if they are not able to go with me, shall write to my father to come to England, as he lately sent me word he would do, at any time

that I would meet him there—of course, to return immediately with him to my sister. They will both, I believe, be in England after Easter next year; and then I shall hope to be allowed to see you, my dear Lady Dacre, and express to you how much I have sympathized with you in all you have suffered.

I am not aware of having spoken unjustly or disparagingly of the dramatic profession. You say I am ungrateful to it: is it because I owe many of my friends (yourself among the number) to it that you say so? or do you think that I forget that circumstance? But to value it as an art, simply for the personal advantages or pleasures that it was the means of affording me, would be surely quite as absurd as to forget that it did procure such for me. Then, upon reflection, few things have ever puzzled me more than the fact of people liking *me* because I pretended to be a pack of Juliets and Belvideras, and creatures who were *not* me. Perhaps *I was jealous of my parts*; certainly, the good will my assumption of them obtained for me, always seemed to me quite as curious as flattering, or indeed rather more so. I did not think it an unbecoming comment on my father's acting again at the Queen's request, when I said that the excitement to which he had been habituated for so many years had still charms for him; it would be very strange indeed if it had not. It is chiefly from this point of view, and one or two others bearing on the moral health, that I deprecate for those I love the exercise of that profession; the claims of which to be considered as an art I cannot at all determine satisfactorily in my own mind. That we have Shakespeare's plays,

written expressly for the interpretation of acting, is a strong argument for the existence of a positive art of acting: nevertheless——. But, if you please, we will settle that point when I have the pleasure of seeing you. I suppose I shall steam for England in October, when I shall endeavour to see you before I go abroad. Give my kindest regards to Lord Dacre, and believe me always

Very affectionately yours,
F. A. B.

Lenox, September 4th, 1840.

MY DEAREST HARRIET,

. . . First of all, let me congratulate you, and dear Dorothy, upon her improved health. Good as she is, I am sure she must value life; for those who use it best, best know its infinite worth; and for you, my dearest Harriet, this extension of the precious loan of her existence to you, I am persuaded, must be full of the greatest blessings. Give my affectionate love to her when you write to her or see her again; for, indeed, I suppose you are now at Bannisters, where I should like well to be with you, but I much fear that I shall not see you this winter, though I expect to sail for England next month. . . .

You ask me of the distance between the Virginia Springs and Lenox, and I am ashamed to say I cannot answer; however, almost half the length of the United States, I think. This, my northern place of summer sojourn, is in the heart of the hill country of Massachusetts, in a district inhabited chiefly by Sedgwicks, and their belongings. . . .

Our friends the Sedgwicks reached their homes about a fortnight ago, and the hills and valleys hereabouts rejoiced thereat. . . . Katharine's health and spirits are much revived by the atmosphere of love by which she is surrounded in her home. She bids me give her love to you. I wonder, with your miserable self-distrust, whether you have any idea of the affectionate regard all these people bear you. Katharine, a short time before leaving Europe, saw in a shop a dark grey stuff which resembled a dress you used to wear; she immediately bought it for herself, and carrying it home asked her brother who it reminded him of. He instantly kissed the stuff, exclaiming, "H—— S——!" Young Kate's journal contains a most affectionate record of their short intimacy with you at Wiesbaden; and you have left a deep impression on these hearts, where as little that is bad or base abides as in any frail human hearts I ever knew. . . .

I have regained so much of my former appearance that I trust when I do see you I shall not horrify you, as you seemed some time ago to anticipate, by an apparition altogether unlike your, ever *essentially* the same,

F. A. B.

Butler Place, October 7th, 1840.

. . . Dearest Harriet, whatever may be the evils which may spring from the amazing facilities of intercourse daily developing between distant countries (and with so great good, how should there not be some evil?), think of those whose lots are cast far from their early homes and friends; think of the deathlike separa-

tion that going to America has been to thousands who left England, and friends there, but a few years ago; the uncertainty of intercourse by letter, the interminable intervals of suspense, the impossibility of making known or understood by hearts that yearned for such information the new and strange circumstances of the exile's existence; the gradual dying out of friendships, and cooling of warm regard, from the impossibility of sufficient intercourse to keep interest alive; and sympathy, after endeavouring in vain to picture the distant home and surroundings and daily occupations of the absent friend, dwindling and withering away for want of necessary aliment, in spite of all the efforts which imagination could make to satisfy the affectionate desire and longing loving inquiries of the heart. Think of all that those two *existences* as you call them (existences no more—but mere ideas), Time and Space, have caused of misery and suspense and heart-wearing anxiety, and rejoice that so much has been done to make parting less bitter, and absence endurable, through hope that now amounts almost to certainty.

My own plans, which I thought so thoroughly settled a short time ago, have again become extremely indefinite. It is now considered inexpedient that I should travel on the Continent, though there is no objection to my remaining in England until my father's return, which I understand is expected soon after Easter. As, however, my motive in leaving America is to be with my father and sister, I have no idea of going to London to remain there three months, without any expectation of seeing them. This consideration would incline me to put off my visit to England till the

spring, but it is not yet determined who, or whether any of us, will go to Georgia for the winter. My being taken thither is entirely uncertain; but should the contrary be decided upon, I might perhaps come to England immediately, as I would rather pass the winter in London, among my friends, if I am to spend it alone, than here, where the severe weather suspends all out-of-door exercise, interests, and occupations, and where the absolute solitude is a terrible trial to my nerves and spirits.

At present, however, I have not a notion what will be determined about it, but as soon as I have any positive idea upon the subject I will let you know.

We returned from Massachusetts a few days ago, and I find a profusion of flowers and almost summer heat here, though the golden showers that every now and then flicker from the trees, and the rustling sound of fallen leaves, and the autumnal smell of mignonette, and other "fall" flowers, whisper of the coming winter; still all here at present is bright and sweet, with that peculiar combination of softness and brilliancy which belongs to the autumn in this part of America. It is the pleasantest season of the year here, and indescribably beautiful. . . .

Good-bye, dearest Harriet; I had hoped to have joined you and Emily at Bannisters, but that pretty plan is all rubbed out now, and I do not know when I shall see you; but, thanks to those blessed beings—the steam-ships, those Atlantic angels of speed and certainty, it now seems as if I could do so "at any moment." God bless you.

Yours ever,
F. A. B.

Butler Place, October 26th.

I beg you will not stop short, as in your last letter, received the day before yesterday, dearest Harriet, with "but I will not overwhelm you with questions:" it is particularly agreeable to me to have specific questions to answer in the letters I receive from you, and I hope you perceive that I do religiously reply to anything in the shape of a query. It is pleasant to me to know upon what particular points of my doing, being, and suffering you desire to be enlightened; because although I know everything I write to you interests you, I like to be able to satisfy even a few of those "I wonders" that are perpetually rising up in our imaginations with respect to those we love and who are absent from us.

You ask me if I ever write any journal, or anything else now. The time that I passed in the South was so crowded with daily and hourly occupations that, though I kept a regular journal, it was hastily written, and received constant additional notes of things that occurred, and that I wished to remember, inserted in a very irregular fashion in it. . . . I think I should like to carry this journal down to Georgia with me this winter; to revise, correct, and add whatever my second experience might furnish to the chronicle. It has been suggested to me that such an account of a Southern plantation might be worth publishing; but I think such a publication would be a breach of confidence, an advantage taken on my part of the situation of trust, which I held on the estate. As my condemnation of the whole system is unequivocal, and all my illustrations of its evils must be drawn from our own plantation, I do not

think I have a right to exhibit the interior management and economy of that property to the world at large, as a sample of Southern slavery, especially as I did not go thither with any such purpose. This winter I think I shall mention my desire upon the subject before going to the South, and of course any such publication must then depend on the acquiescence of the owners of the estate. I am sure that no book of mine on the subject could be of as much use to the poor people on Butler's Island as my residence among them; and I should, therefore, be very unwilling to do anything that was likely to interfere with that; although I have sometimes been haunted with the idea that it was an imperative duty, knowing what I know, and having seen what I have seen, to do all that lies in my power to show the dangers and evils of this frightful institution. And the testimony of a planter's wife, whose experience has all been gathered from estates where the slaves are universally admitted to be well treated, should carry with it some authority. So I am occupying myself, from time to time, as my leisure allows, in making a fair copy of my Georgia Journal.

I occasionally make very copious extracts from what I read, and also write critical analyses of the books that please or displease me, in the language—French or Italian—in which they are written; but these are fragmentary, and do not, I think, entitle me to say that I am writing anything. No one here is interested in anything that I write, and I have too little serious habit of study, too little application, and too much vanity and desire for the encouragement of praise, to achieve much in my condition of absolute intellectual solitude. . . .

Here are two of your questions answered ; the third is—whether I let the slave question rest more than I did? Oh yes ; for I have come to the conclusion that no words of mine could be powerful enough to dispel the clouds of prejudice which early habits of thought, and the general opinion of society upon this subject, have gathered round the minds of the people I live among. I do not know whether they ever think or read about it, and my arguments, though founded in this case on pretty sound reason, are apt to degenerate into passionate appeals, the violence of which is not calculated to do much good in the way of producing convictions in the minds of others. . . .

Even if the property were mine, I could exercise no power over it ; nor could our children, after our death, do anything for those wretched slaves, under the present laws of Georgia. All that any one could do, would be to refrain from using the income derived from the estates, and return it to the rightful owners—that is, the earners of it. Had I such a property, I think I would put my slaves at once quietly upon the footing of free labourers, paying them wages, and making them pay me rent and take care of themselves. Of course I should be shot by my next neighbour (against whom no verdict would be found except “Serve her right!”) in the first week of my experiment ; but *if I wasn’t*, I think, reckoning only the meanest profit to be derived from the measure, I should double the income of the estate in less than three years. . . . I am more than ever satisfied that God and Mammon would be equally propitiated by emancipation.

You ask me whether I take any interest in the

Presidential election? Yes, though I have not room left for my reasons—and I have some, besides that best woman's reason, sympathy with the politics of the man I belong to. The party coming into power are, I believe, at heart less democratic than the other; and while the natural advantages of this wonderful country remain unexhausted (and they are apparently inexhaustible), I am sure the Republican Government is by far the best for the people themselves, besides thinking it the best in the abstract, as you know I do.

God bless you, my dearest Harriet.

I am ever yours most affectionately,

F. A. B.

[The question of my spending the winter in Georgia was finally determined by Mr. J—— B——'s decided opposition to my doing so. He was part proprietor of the plantation, and positively stipulated that I should not again be taken thither, considering my presence there as a mere source of distress to myself, annoyance to others, and danger to the property.]

I question the validity of the latter objection, but not at all that of the two first; and am sure that, upon the whole, his opposition to my residence among his slaves was not only justifiable but perfectly reasonable.

My Georgia journal was not published until thirty years after it was written, during the civil war in the United States. I was then passing some time in England, and the people among whom I lived were, like most well-educated members of the upper classes of English society, Southern sympathizers. The

ignorant and mischievous nonsense I was continually compelled to hear upon the subject of slavery in the seceding States determined me to publish my own observation of it—not, certainly, that I had in those latter years of my life any fallacious expectation of making converts on the subject, but that I felt constrained at that juncture to bear my testimony to the miserable nature and results of the system, of which so many of my countrymen and women were becoming the sentimental apologists.

It being now settled that I was not to return to the Plantation, my thoughts had hardly reverted to the prospect of a winter in England when I received the news of my father's return from the Continent, and dangerous illness in London ; so that, I was told, unless I could go to him immediately, there was but little probability of my ever seeing him again. The misfortune I had so often anticipated now seemed to have overtaken me, and instant preparation for my leaving America being made, and an elderly lady, with whom I had become connected by my marriage, having exerted her influence in my behalf, I was not allowed, under such painful circumstances, again to cross the Atlantic alone, but returned with a very heavy heart to my own country, but with the comfort of being accompanied by my whole family.

The news that met me on my arrival was that my father was at the point of death, that he would not probably survive twenty-four hours, and that it was altogether inexpedient that he should see me, as, if he recognized me, which was doubtful, my unexpected appearance, it having been impossible to prepare him

for it, might only be the means of causing him a violent and perhaps painful shock of nervous agitation. This terrible verdict, pronounced by three of the most eminent medical men of the day, Bright, Liston, and Wilson, was a dreadful close to all the anxious days and hours of the sea voyage, during which I had hoped and prayed to be again permitted to embrace my father. But in my deep distress, I could not help remembering that, after all, his physicians, able as they were, had not the keys of life and death. And so it proved: my father made an almost miraculous rally, recovered, and survived the sentence pronounced against him, for many years.

Not many days after our arrival, his improved condition admitted of his being told of my return, and allowed to see me. Cadaverous is the only word that describes the appearance to which acute suffering and subsequent prostration had reduced him; he looked, indeed, like one returned from the dead, and, in his joy at seeing me again, declared that I had restored him to life, and that my arrival, though he had not known of it, had called him back to existence—a sympathetic theory of convalescence, to which I do not think his doctors gave in their adhesion.

We now took up our abode in London; first at the Clarendon Hotel, and afterwards in Clarges Street, Piccadilly, where my father, as soon as he could be moved, came to reside with us, and where my sister joined us on her return from Italy. My friend, Miss S—, coming from Ireland to stay with me soon after my arrival in England, added to my happiness in finding myself once more with my own family, and in my own country.

Clarges Street, March 21st.

You will, ere this, dearest H——, have received my answer to your first letter. You ask me, in your second, what we think about the chances of a war with America. Our wishes prompt us to the belief that a war between the two countries is *impossible*, though the tone of the newspapers, within the last few days, has been horribly pugnacious. A letter was received the day before yesterday, from our Liverpool factor, asking us what is to be done about some cotton which had just come to them from the plantation, in the event of war breaking out: a supposition which he had treated as an utter impossibility when he was last in London, but which he confessed in this letter did not seem to him quite so impossible now. I do not, for my own part, see very well how either party is to get out of its present attitude towards the other peaceably and, at the same time, without some compromise of dignity. But I pray God that the hearts of the two nations may be inclined to peace, and then, doubtless, some cunning device will be found to save their *honour*. The virtuous “*if*” of Touchstone is, I am afraid, not as valid in national as individual quarrels.

Tell Mr. H—— W——, with my love, that it is all a hoax about Niagara Falls having *fallen* down; and that they are still *falling* down, according to their custom; but if you should find this intelligence affect him with too painful a disappointment, you may comfort him by assuring him that they inevitably must and will fall down one of these days, and, what is more, stay fallen, and precisely in the manner they

are now said to have begun their career—by the gradual wearing away of the rock between Lake Ontario and Lake Erie.

We were at the opera the Saturday after you left us; but it was a mediocre performance, both music and dancing, and gave me but little pleasure. I went last night again with my father, and was enchanted with the opera, which was an old favourite, "Tancredi," in which I heard Persiani, an admirable artist, with a mere golden wire of voice, of which she made most capital use, and Pauline Garcia, who possesses all the genius of her family; and between them it was a perfect performance. The latter is a sister of Malibran's, and will certainly be one of the finest dramatic singers of these times. But the proximity of people to me in the stalls is so intolerable that I think I shall give mine up; for I am in a state of nervous *crawling* the whole time, with being pushed and pressed and squeezed and leaned on and breathed on by my fellow-creatures. You remember my old theory, that we are all of us surrounded by an atmosphere proper to ourselves, emanating from each of us,—a separate, sensitive envelope, extending some little distance from our visible persons. I am persuaded that this is the case, and that when my *individual atmosphere* is invaded by any one, it affects my whole nervous system. The proximity of any *bodies* but those I love best is unendurable to my body.

My father is much in the same condition as when you went away, suffering a great deal, and complaining frequently; but by his desire we have a dinner-party here on Tuesday, and he has accepted two in-

vitations to dine out himself. My chicks are pretty well. . . .

May God bless you, dear.

I am ever your own

F. A. B.

Clarges Street.

This letter was begun three days ago, and it is now Thursday, March the 25th. Do not, I beseech you, ever make any appeals to my imagination, or my feelings. I have lost all I ever had of the first, and I never had any at all of the second. . . .

You ask me if I have been riding. Only once or twice, for I may not do what I so fain would, give all the visiting to utter neglect, and ride every day. Yesterday I was on horseback for two hours with Henry, who, having sold his pretty mare, for £65, to the author of the new comedy at Covent Garden, was obliged to bestride one of Mr. Allen's screws, as he calls them. The day was dusty and windy, and very disagreeable, but I was all the better for my shaking, as I always am. I am never in health, looks, or spirits without daily hard exercise on horseback.

My first meeting with Mrs. Grote (I am answering your questions, dearest H——, though you have probably forgotten them) took place after all, at Sydney Smith's, at a dinner the very next day after you left us. We did not say a great deal to each other, but upon my saying incidentally (I forget about what) "I, who have always preserved my liberty, at least the small crumb of it that a woman can own anywhere," she faced about, in a most emphatical manner, and

said, "Then you've struggled for it." "No, I have not been obliged to do so." "Ah, then, you must, or you'll lose it, you'll lose it, depend upon it." I smiled, but did not reply, because I saw that she was not taking into consideration the fact of my living in America; and this was the only truly *Grotesque* (as Sydney Smith says) passage between us. Since then we have again ineffectually exchanged cards, and yesterday I received an invitation to her house, so that I suppose we shall finally become acquainted with each other.

[Mrs. Grote, wife of George Grote, the banker, member of Parliament, and historian of Greece, was one of the cleverest and most eccentric women in the London society of my time. No worse a judge than De Tocqueville pronounced her the cleverest woman of his acquaintance; and she was certainly a very remarkable member of the circle of remarkable men, among whom she was living, when I first knew her. At that time she was the female centre of the Radical party in politics—a sort of not-young-or-handsome feminine oracle, among a set of very clever half-heathenish men, in whose drawing-room, Sydney Smith used to say, he always expected to find an altar to Zeus. At this time Mr. Grote was in the House of Commons, and as it was before the publication of his admirable history, his speeches, which were as remarkable for their sound sense and enlightened liberality as for their clear and forcible style, were not unfrequently attributed to his wife, whose considerable conversational powers, joined to a rather dictatorial style of exercising them, sometimes threw her refined and

modest husband a little into the shade in general society. When first I made Mrs. Grote's acquaintance, the persons one most frequently met at her house in Eccleston Street were Roebuck, Leader, Byron's quondam associate Trelawny, and Sir William Molesworth ; both the first and last mentioned gentlemen were then of an infinitely deeper shade of radicalism in their politics than they subsequently became. The other principal element of Mrs. Grote's society, at this time, consisted of musical composers and performers, who found in her a cordial and hospitable friend and hostess, and an amateur of unusual knowledge and discrimination, as well as much taste and feeling for their beautiful art. Her love of music, and courteous reception of all foreign artists, caused her to be generally sought by eminent professors coming to England ; and Liszt, Madame Viardot, Dessauer, Thalberg, Mademoiselle Lind, and Mendelssohn were among the celebrated musicians one frequently met at her house. With the two latter she was very intimate, and it was in her drawing-room that my sister gave her first public concert in London. Mendelssohn used often to visit her at a small country-place she had in the neighbourhood of Burnham Beeches.

It was a very small and modest residence, situated on the verge of the magnificent tract of woodland scenery known by that name ; a dependence, I believe, of the Dropmore estate, which it adjoined. It was an unenclosed space of considerable extent, of wild, heathy moorland ; short turfy strips of common ; dingles full of foxglove, harebell, and gnarled old stunted hawthorn bushes ; and knolls, covered with waving crests

of powerful feathery fern. It was intersected with gravelly paths and roads, whose warm colour contrasted and harmonized with the woodland hues of everything about them ; and roofed in by dark green vaults of the most magnificent beech foliage I have ever seen anywhere. The trees were of great age, and enormous size ; and from some accidental influence affecting their growth, the huge trunks were many of them contorted so as to resemble absolutely the twisted Saxon pillars of some old cathedral. In many of them the powerful branches (as large themselves as trunks of common trees) spread out from the main tree, at a height of about six feet from the ground, into a sort of capacious leafy chamber, where eight or ten people could have sat embowered. A more perfectly English woodland scene it would be impossible to imagine, and here, as Mrs. Grote told me, Mendelssohn found the inspiration of much of the music of his "Midsummer Night's Dream." (The overture he had composed, and played to us one evening at my father's house, when first he came to England, before he was one and twenty.)

At one time Mrs. Grote contemplated erecting some monument in the beautiful wood to his memory, and showed me a copy of verses, not devoid of merit, which she thought of inscribing on it to his honour ; but she never carried out the suggestion of her affectionate admiration ; and to those who knew and loved Mendelssohn (alas ! the expressions are synonymous), the glorious wood itself, where he walked and mused and held converse with the spirit of Shakespeare, forms a solemn sylvan temple, for ever consecrated to

tender memories of his bright genius and lovely character.

When first I knew Mrs. Grote, however, her artistic sympathies were keenly excited in a very different direction; for she had undertaken, under some singular impulse of mistaken enthusiasm, to make what she called "an honest woman" of the celebrated dancer, Fanny Ellsler, and to introduce her into London society,—neither of them very attainable results, even for as valiant and enterprising a person as Mrs. Grote. When first I heard of this strange undertaking I was, in common with most of her friends, much surprised at it; nor was it until some years after the entire failure of this quixotic experiment, that I became aware that she had been actuated by any motive but the kindest and most mistaken enthusiasm.

Mademoiselle Ellsler was at this time at the height of her great and deserved popularity as a dancer, and whatever I may have thought of the expediency or possibility of making what Mrs. Grote called "an honest woman" of her, I was among the most enthusiastic admirers of her great excellence in her elegant art. She was the only intellectual dancer I have ever seen. Inferior to Taglioni (that embodied genius of rhythmical motion) in lightness, grace, and sentiment; to Carlotta Grisi in the two latter qualities; and with less mere vigour and elasticity than Cerito, she excelled them all in dramatic expression; and parts of her performance in the ballets of the "Tarantella" and the wild legend of "Gisèle, the Willye," exhibited tragic power of a very high order, while the same strongly dramatic element was the cause of her pre-

eminence in all national and characteristic dances, such as El Jaleo de Xeres, the Cracovienne, et cetera. This predominance of the intellectual element in her dancing may have been the result of original organization, or it may have been owing to the mental training which Ellsler received from Frederic von Genz, Gensius, the German writer and diplomatist, who educated her, and whose mistress she became while still quite a young girl. However that may be, Mrs. Grote always maintained that her genius lay full as much in her head as in her heels. I am not sure that the finest performance of hers that I ever witnessed was not a minuet in which she danced the man's part, in full court-suit of the time of Louis XVI., with most admirable grace and nobility of demeanour.

Mrs. Grote laboured hard to procure her acceptance in society; her personal kindness to her was of the most generous description: but her great object of making "an honest woman" of her, I believe failed signally in every way.

On one occasion I paid Mrs. Grote a visit at Burnham Beeches. Our party consisted only of my sister and myself; the Viennese composer, Dessauer; and Chorley, the musical critic of the *Athenæum*, who was very intimately acquainted with us all. The eccentricities of our hostess, with which some of us were already tolerably familiar, were a source of unfeigned amazement and awe to Dessauer, who, himself the most curious, quaint, and withal nervously excitable and irritable humourist, was thrown into alternate convulsions of laughter and spasms of terror at the portentous female figure, who, with a stick in her

hand, a man's hat on her head, and a coachman's box-coat of drab cloth with manifold capes, over her petticoats (English women had not yet then adopted a costume undistinguishable from that of the other sex), stalked about the house and grounds, alternately superintending various matters of the domestic economy, and discussing, with equal knowledge and discrimination, questions of musical criticism and taste.

One most ludicrous scene which took place on this occasion I shall never forget. She had left us to our own devices, and we were all in the garden. I was sitting in a swing, and my sister, Dessauer, and Chorley were lying on the lawn at my feet, when presently, striding towards us, appeared the extraordinary figure of Mrs. Grote, who, as soon as she was within speaking-trumpet distance, hailed us with a stentorian challenge about some detail of dinner—I think it was whether the majority voted for bacon and peas or bacon and beans. Having duly settled this momentous question, as Mrs. Grote turned and marched away, Dessauer—who had been sitting straight up, listening with his head first on one side and then on the other, like an eagerly intelligent terrier, taking no part in the culinary controversy (indeed, his entire ignorance of English necessarily disqualified him for even comprehending it), but staring intently, with open eyes and mouth, at Mrs. Grote—suddenly began, with his hands and lips, to imitate the rolling of a drum, and then broke out aloud with, “*Malbrook s'en vat' en guerre*,” etc.; whereupon the terrible lady faced right about, like a soldier, and, planting her stick in the ground, surveyed Dessauer with an awful countenance,

The wretched little man grew red, and then purple, and then black in the face with fear and shame; and exclaiming in his agony, "*Ah, bonté divine! elle m'a compris!*" rolled over and over on the lawn, as if he had a fit. Mrs. Grote majestically waved her hand, and with magnanimous disdain of her small adversary turned and departed, and we remained horror-stricken at the effect of this involuntary tribute of Dessauer's to her martial air and deportment.

When she returned, however, it was to enter into a most interesting and animated discussion upon the subject of Glück's music; and suddenly, some piece from the "Iphigenia" being mentioned, she shouted for her man-servant, to whom on his appearance she gave orders to bring her a chair and footstool, and "the big fiddle" (the violoncello) out of the hall; and taking it forthwith between her knees, proceeded to play, with excellent taste and expression, some of Glück's noble music upon the sonorous instrument, with which St. Cecilia is the only female I ever saw on terms of such familiar intimacy.

The second time Mrs. Grote invited me to the Beeches, it was to meet Mdlle. Ellsler. A conversation I had with my admirable and excellent friend, Sydney Smith, determined me to decline joining the party. He wound up his kind and friendly advice to me upon the subject by saying, "No, no, my child; that's all very well for Grote" (the name he always gave Mrs. Grote, whose good qualities and abilities he esteemed very highly, whatever he may have thought of her eccentricities); "but don't mix yourself up with that sort of thing." And I had

reason to rejoice that I followed his good advice. Mrs. Grote told me, in the course of a conversation we once had on the subject of Mdlle. Ellsler, that when the latter went to America, she, Mrs. Grote, had undertaken most generously the entire care and charge of her child, a lovely little girl of about six years old. "All I said to her," said this strange, kind-hearted woman, "was 'Well, Fanny, send the brat to me; I don't ask you whose child it is, and I don't care, so long as it isn't that fool d'Orsay's'" (Mrs. Grote had small esteem for *the* dandy of his day), "'and I'll take the best care of it I can.'" And she did take the kindest care of it during the whole period of Mdlle. Ellsler's absence from Europe.

The next time I visited the Beeches was after an interval of some years, when I went thither with my kind and constant friend, Mr. Rogers. My circumstances had altered very painfully, and I was again labouring for my own support.

I went down to Burnham with the old poet, and was sorry to find that, though he had consented to pay Mrs. Grote this visit, he was not in particularly harmonious tune for her society, which was always rather a trial to his fastidious nerves and refined taste. The drive of between three and four miles in a fly (very different from his own luxurious carriage), through intricate lanes and rural winding avenues, did not tend to soften his acerbities, and I perceived at once, on alighting from the carriage, that the aspect of the place did not find favour in his eyes.

Mrs. Grote had just put up an addition to her house, a sort of single wing, which added a good-sized

drawing-room to the modest mansion I had before visited. Whatever accession of comfort the house received within, from this addition to its size, its beauty, externally, was not improved by it, and Mr. Rogers stood before the offending edifice, surveying it with a sardonic sneer that I should think even brick and mortar must have found it hard to bear. He had hardly uttered his three first disparaging bitter sentences, of utter scorn and abhorrence of the architectural abortion, which, indeed, it was, when Mrs. Grote herself made her appearance in her usual country costume, box-coat, hat on her head, and stick in her hand. Mr. Rogers turned to her with a verjuice smile, and said, "I was just remarking that in whatever part of the world I had seen this building I should have guessed to whose taste I might attribute its erection." To which, without an instant's hesitation, she replied, "Ah, 'tis a beastly thing, to be sure. The confounded workmen played the devil with the place while I was away." Then, without any more words, she led the way to the interior of her habitation, and I could not but wonder whether her blunt straightforwardness did not disconcert and rebuke Mr. Rogers for his treacherous sneer.

During this visit, much interesting conversation passed with reference to the letters of Sydney Smith, who was just dead; and the propriety of publishing all his correspondence, which, of course, contained strictures and remarks upon people with whom he had been living in habits of friendly social intimacy. I remember one morning a particularly lively discussion on the subject, between Mrs. Grote and Mr.

Rogers. The former had a great many letters from Sydney Smith, and urged the impossibility of publishing them, with all their comments on members of the London world. Rogers, on the contrary, apparently delighted at the idea of the mischief such revelations would make, urged Mrs. Grote to give them ungarbled to the press. "Oh, but now," said the latter, "here, for instance, Mr. Rogers, such a letter as this, about —; do see how he cuts up the poor fellow. It really never would do to publish it." Rogers took the letter from her, and read it with a stony grin of diabolical delight on his countenance and occasional chuckling exclamations of "Publish it! publish it! Put an R, dash, or an R and four stars for the name. He'll never know it, though everybody else will." While Mr. Rogers was thus delecting himself, in anticipation, with R——'s execution, Mrs. Grote, by whose side I was sitting on a low stool, quietly unfolded another letter of Sydney Smith's, and silently held it before my eyes, and the very first words in it were a most ludicrous allusion to Rogers' cadaverous appearance. As I raised my eyes from this most absurd description of him, and saw him still absorbed in his evil delight, the whole struck me as so like a scene in a farce that I could not refrain from bursting out laughing.

In talking of Sydney Smith Mr. Rogers gave us many amusing details of various visits he paid him at his place in Somersetshire, Combe Flory, where, on one occasion, Jeffrey was also one of the party. It was to do honour to these illustrious guests that Sydney Smith had a pair of horns fastened on his

donkey, who was turned into the paddock so adorned, in order, as he said, to give the place a more noble and park-like appearance; and it was on this same donkey that Jeffrey mounted when Sydney Smith exclaimed with such glee—

“As short, but not as stout, as Bacchus,
As witty as Horatius Flaccus,
As great a radical as Gracchus,
There he goes riding on my *jackuss*.”

Rogers told us too, with great satisfaction, an anecdote of Sydney Smith's son, known in London society by the amiable nickname of the Assassin. . . . This gentleman, being rather addicted to horse-racing and the undesirable society of riders, trainers, jockeys, and semi-turf blacklegs, meeting a friend of his father's on his arrival at Combe Flory, the visitor said, “So you have got Rogers here, I find.” “Oh, yes,” replied Sydney Smith's dissimilar son, with a rueful countenance, “but it isn't *the* Rogers, you know.” *The* Rogers, according to him, being a famous horse-trainer and rider of that name.

I have called him his father's dissimilar son, but feel inclined to withdraw that epithet, when I recollect his endeavour to find an appropriate subject of conversation for the Archbishop of York, by whom, on one occasion, he found himself seated at dinner: “Pray, my lord, how long do you think it took Nebuchadnezzar to get into condition again after his turn out at grass?”

The third time I went to Burnham Beeches, it was to meet a very clever Piedmontese gentleman, with whom Mr. Grote had become intimate, Mr. Senior, known and valued for his ability as a political econo-

mist, his clear and acute intelligence, his general information and agreeable powers of conversation. His universal acquaintance with all political and statistical details, and the whole contemporaneous history of European events, and the readiness and fulness of his information on all matters of interest connected with public affairs used to make Mrs. Grote call him her "man of facts." The other member of our small party was Charles Greville, whose acquaintance Mrs. Grote had made through his intimacy with my sister and myself. This gentleman was one of the most agreeable members of our intimate society. His mother was the sister of the late Duke of Portland, and during the short administration of his uncle, Charles Greville, then quite a young man, had a sinecure office in the island of Jamaica bestowed upon him, and was made Clerk of the Privy Council; which appointment, by giving him an assured position and handsome income for life, effectually put a stop to his real advancement at the very outset, by rendering all effort of ambition on his part unnecessary, and inducing him, instead of distinguishing himself by an honourable public career, to adopt the life and pursuits of a mere man of pleasure, . . . and to waste his talents in the petty intrigues of society, and the excitements of the turf. He was an influential member of the London great world of his day; his clear good sense, excellent judgment, knowledge of the world, and science of expediency, combined with his good temper and ready friendliness, made him a sort of universal referee in the society to which he belonged. Men consulted him about their difficulties with men;

and women, about their squabbles with women; and men and women, about their troubles with the opposite sex. He was called into the confidence of all manner of people, and trusted with the adjustment of all sorts of affairs. He knew the secrets of everybody, which everybody seemed willing that he should know; and he was one of the principal lawgivers of the turf. The publication of Charles Greville's Memoirs, which shocked the whole of London society, surprised, as much as it grieved, his friends, the character they revealed being painfully at variance with their impression of him, and not a little, in some respects, at variance with that of a gentleman. . . . Our small party at the Beeches was broken up on the occasion of this, my third visit, by our hostess's indisposition. She was seized with a violent attack of neuralgia in the head, to which she was subject, and by which she was compelled to take to her bed, and remain there in darkness and almost intolerable suffering for hours, and sometimes days together. I have known her prostrated by a paroxysm of this sort when she had invited a large party to dinner, and obliged to leave her husband to do the honours to their guests, while she betook herself to solitary confinement in a darkened room.

On the present occasion the gentlemen guests took their departure for London, and I should have done the same, but that Mrs. Grote entreated me to remain, for the chance of her being soon rid of her torment. Towards the middle of the day she begged me to come to her room, when, feeling, I presume, some temporary relief, she presently began talking vehemently to me about a French opera of "The Tempest,"

by Halévy, I believe, which had just been produced in Paris, with Madame Rossi Sontag as Miranda, and Lablache as Caliban. Mrs. Grote was violent in her abuse of the composition, deploring, as I joined her in doing, that Mendelssohn should have taken "The Tempest" for the subject of an opera, and so prevented less worthy composers from laying hands upon it.

Towards this time Mrs. Grote became absorbed by a passionate enthusiasm for Mademoiselle Jenny Lind, of whom she was an idolatrous worshipper, and who frequently spent her days of leisure at the Beeches. Mrs. Grote engrossed Mademoiselle Lind in so curious a manner that, socially, the accomplished singer could hardly be approached but through her. She was kind enough to ask me twice to meet her, when Mendelssohn and herself were together at Burnham—an offer of a rare pleasure, of which I was unable to avail myself. I remember, about this time, a comical conversation I had with her, in which, after surveying and defining her social position and its various advantages, she exclaimed, "But I want some lords, Fanny. Can't you help me to some lords?" I told her, laughingly, that I thought the lady who held watch and ward over Mademoiselle Jenny Lind, might have as many lords at her feet as she pleased. . . .

Besides her literary and artistic tastes, she took a keen interest in politics, and among other causes for the slight esteem in which she not unnaturally held my intellectual capacity, was my ignorance of, and indifference to, anything connected with party politics, especially as discussed in coterie and by coterie queens.

Great questions of European policy, and the important movements of foreign governments, or our own, in matters tending to affect the general welfare and progress of humanity, had a profound interest for me; but I talked so little on such subjects, as became the profundity of my ignorance, that Mrs. Grote supposed them altogether above my sympathy, and probably above my comprehension.

I remember very well, one evening at her own house, I was working at some embroidery (I never saw her with that feminine implement, a needle, in her fingers, and have a notion she despised those who employed it, and the results they achieved), and I was listening with perfect satisfaction to an able and animated discussion between Mr. Grote, Charles Greville, Mr. Senior, and a very intelligent Piedmontese then staying at the Beeches, on the aspect of European politics, and more especially of Italian affairs, when Mrs. Grote, evidently thinking the subject too much for me, drew her chair up to mine, and began a condescending conversation about matters which she probably judged more on a level with my comprehension; for she seemed both relieved and surprised when I stopped her kind effort to entertain me at once, thanking her, and assuring her that I was enjoying extremely what I was listening to.

Some time after this, however, I must say I took a mischievous opportunity of purposely confirming her poor opinion of my brains; for on her return from Paris, where she had been during Louis Napoleon's *coup d'état*, she offered to show me Mr. Senior's journal, kept there at the same time, and recording all the

remarkable and striking incidents of that exciting period of French affairs. This was a temptation—but it was a greater one to me, being, as Madame de Sevigné says of herself, “*méchante, ma fille*,”—to make fun of Mrs. Grote, and so, comforting myself with thinking that this probably highly interesting and instructive record, kept by Mr. Senior, would be sure to be published, and was then in manuscript (a thing which I abhor), I quietly declined the offer, looking as like Audrey, when she asks “What is poetical?” as I could: to which Mrs. Grote, with an indescribable look, accent, and gesture of good-humoured contempt, replied, “Ah, well, it might not interest you; I dare say it wouldn’t. It *is* political, to be sure; it is political.”

This is the second very clever woman, to whom I know my intelligence had been vaunted, to whom I turned out completely “Paradise Lost,” as my mother’s comical old acquaintance, Lady Dashwood King, used to say to Adelaide of me: “Ah, yes, I know your sister is vastly clever, exceedingly intelligent, and all that kind of thing, but she is ‘Paradise Lost’ to me, my dear.” I sometimes regretted having hidden my small light under a bushel as entirely as I did, in the little intercourse I had with the first Lady Ashburton, Lady Harriet Montague, with whom some of my friends desired that I should become acquainted, and who asked me to her house in London, and to the Grange, having been assured that there was something in me, and trying to find it out, without ever succeeding.

Mrs. Grote had generally a very contemptuous regard for the capacity of her female friends. She was extremely fond of my sister, but certainly had not the

remotest appreciation of her great cleverness; and on one occasion betrayed the most whimsical surprise when Adelaide mentioned having received a letter from the great German scholar, Waelcker. "Who? what? you? Waelcker, write to you!" exclaimed Grota, in amazement more apparent than courteous, it evidently being beyond the wildest stretch of her imagination that one of the most learned men in Europe, and profoundest scholars of Germany, could be a correspondent of my sister's, and a devoted admirer of her brilliant intelligence.

Mrs. Grote's appearance was extremely singular; "striking" is, I think, the most appropriate word for it. She was very tall, square built, and high shouldered, her hands and arms, feet and legs (the latter she was by no means averse to displaying), were uncommonly handsome and well made. Her face was rather that of a clever man than a woman, and I used to think there was some resemblance between herself and our piratical friend, Trelawney.

Her familiar style of language among her intimates was something that could only be believed by those who heard it; it was technical to a degree that was amazing. I remember, at a dinner party at her own table, her speaking of Audubon's work on ornithology, and saying that some of the incidents of his personal adventures, in the pursuit of his favourite science, had pleased her particularly; instancing, among other anecdotes, an occasion on which, as she said, "he was almost starving in the woods, you know, and found some kind of wild creature, which he immediately disembowelled and devoured." This, at dinner, at her own

table, before a large party, was rather forcible. But little usual as her modes of expression were, she never seemed to be in the slightest degree aware of the startling effect they produced ; she uttered them with the most straightforward unconsciousness and unconcern. Her taste in dress was, as might have been expected, slightly eccentric, but, for a person with so great a perception of harmony of sound, her passion for discordant colours was singular. The first time I ever saw her she was dressed in a bright brimstone-coloured silk gown, made so short as to show her feet and ankles, having on her head a white satin hat, with a forest of white feathers ; and I remember her standing, with her feet wide apart and her arms akimbo, in this costume before me, and challenging me upon some political question, by which, and her appearance, I was much astonished and a little frightened. One evening she came to my sister's house dressed entirely in black, but with scarlet shoes on, with which I suppose she was particularly pleased, for she lay on a sofa with her feet higher than her head, American fashion, the better to display or contemplate them. I remember, at a party, being seated by Sydney Smith, when Mrs. Grote entered with a rose-coloured turban on her head, at which he suddenly exclaimed, " Now I know the meaning of the word grotesque ? " The mischievous wit professed his cordial liking for both her and her husband, saying, " I like them, I like them ; I like him, he is so ladylike ; and I like her, she's such a perfect gentleman ; " in which, however, he had been forestalled by a person who certainly *n'y entendait pas malice*, Mrs. Chorley, the meekest and gentlest of

human beings, who one evening, at a party at her son's house, said to him, pointing out Mrs. Grote, who was dressed in white, "Henry, my dear, who is the gentleman in the white muslin gown?"]

You ask me, dear H——, about Lady Francis's visit. She did not come, as she had proposed doing, on the Friday, for she caught the influenza, and was extremely unwell for a few days; she was here on Monday, coughing incessantly, and looking ill. In the course of our conversation, she exclaimed, "Education! bless me, I think of nothing else but the education of the poor. Don't you find people have got to think and talk about nothing else? I protest, I don't." This made me laugh, and you will understand why; but she didn't, and pressed me very much to tell her what there was absurd in the matter to me: but I declined answering her, at least then and there, as I could not enter into a full discussion of the subject, down to the roots of it, just at that moment. But, as you will well comprehend, the circumstances that render this feverish zeal for education comical, in some of its fine-lady advocates, are peculiarly strong in her case, though she is in earnest enough, and thoroughly well-intentioned in whatever she does. Unwittingly, they are serving the poor, as they certainly do not contemplate doing; for by educating them, even as they are likely to do so, they will gradually prepare them, intelligently and therefore irresistibly, to demand such changes in their political and social conditions as they may now impotently desire, and will assuredly hereafter obtain; but not, I think, with the entirely cordial acquiescence of their Tory educators.

We went to the opera the Saturday after you left us, but both the opera and the ballet were indifferent performances. . . . Do you not know that to misunderstand and be misunderstood is one of the inevitable conditions, and, I think, one of the especial purposes, of our existence? The principal use of the affection of human beings for each other, is to supply the want of perfect comprehension, which is impossible. All the faith and love which we possess are barely sufficient to bridge over the abyss of individualism which separates one human being from another; and they would not, or could not exist, if we really understood each other. God bless you, dear,

Yours ever,
FANNY.

Clarges Street, March 28th, 1841.

DEAREST H——,

My Sunday's avocations being over, or rather——

Here a loud, double knock, and Emily's entrance cut short my sentence; and now that she is gone, it is close upon time to dress for dinner. She bids me tell you, that I am going to-morrow to sit to the sun for my picture for you. I cannot easily conceive how you should desire a daguerreotype of me; you certainly have never seen one, or you would not do so; as it is, I think you will receive a severe shock from the real representation of the face you love so well and know so little . . .

Emily and I went with the children to the Zoological Gardens the other day, where a fine, intelligent-

looking lioness appeared exceedingly struck with them, crouched, and made a spring at little Fan, which made Anne scream, and Emily, and Amelia Twiss, who was with us, catch hold of the child. The keeper assured us it was only play; but I was well pleased, nevertheless, that there was a grating between that very large cat and the little white mouse of a plaything she contemplated.

I have no news to give you, dear H——. A list of our dinner and evening engagements would be interminable, and not very profitable stuff for correspondence.

I breakfasted with Mr. Rogers the other morning, and met Lord Normanby, to whom I preferred a request that he would procure for Henry an unattached company, by which he would obtain a captain's rank and half-pay, and escape being sent to Canada, or, indeed, out of England at all—which, in my father's present condition of health, is very desirable. . . .

We hear of my sister's great success in Italy, in "Norma," from sources which can leave us no doubt of it. . . .

Good-bye, dearest H——. Here is a list of my immediately impending *occupations*—Monday, Emily spends the evening with me, till I go to a party at Miss Rogers's; Tuesday, we go to the opera; Wednesday, we dine with the M——s, and go in the evening to Mrs. Grote's; Thursday, dinner at Mrs. Norton's; Friday, dine with Mrs. C——, who has a ball in the evening; Saturday, the opera again: and so, pray don't say I am wasting my time, or neglecting my opportunities.

Yours ever,

FANNY.

Clarges Street, Thursday, April 2nd.

DEAREST H—,

I wrote to you yesterday, but have half an hour of leisure, and will begin another letter to you now. If it suffers interruption, I shall at any rate have made a start, and the end will come in time, doubtless, if Heaven pleases. . . .

My father is much in the same condition as when last I wrote to you. . . . You ask if he does not begin to count the days till Adelaide's return [my sister was daily expected from Italy, where she had just finished engagements at the Fenice, the San Carlo, and the Scala]: he speaks of that event occasionally, with fervent hope and expectation; but he is seldom roused by anything from the state of suffering self-absorption in which he lives for the most part. . . .

I forget whether we have heard from Adelaide herself since you left us; but my father had a letter the other day from C—, who sent him a detailed account of her success in "Norma," which by all accounts has indeed been very great.

One of C—'s proofs of it amused me not a little. He said that one night, when she was singing it, although some of the royal family were in their box, and appeared about to applaud, the people could not restrain their acclamations, but broke out into vociferous bravos, contrary to etiquette on such occasions, when it is usual for royalty to give the signal to public enthusiasm.

Doubtless this was a very great proof of her power over her fellow-creatures, and of the irresistible human sympathies which are occasionally, even in such an

atmosphere as that of a Neapolitan theatre, with Bourbon royalty present, stronger than social conventionalities. . . .

You ask if the new comedy ("London Assurance") is sufficiently successful to warrant the author's purchase of Henry's horse. I heard, but of course cannot vouch for the truth of the report, that his fixed remuneration was to be three hundred pounds for the piece; and when, as I also hear (but again will not vouch for the truth of my story), besides Henry's, that he has bought another horse, and, besides that other horse, a miraculous "Cab," and, besides that miraculous "Cab," ordered no fewer than seven new coats, I think you will agree with me that the author of "London Assurance," successful as his piece may be, ought to have found a deeper mine than that is likely to prove to serve so many ends. When I expressed my disapprobation of Henry's assisting by any means or in any way such boyish extravagance, he said that the lad had guardians; and therefore I suppose he has property besides what may come of play-writing—for men's persons, however pretty, are seldom put under guardianship of trustees; and Henry argued, in the proper manly fashion, that the youth, having property, had also a right to be as foolish in the abuse of it as he pleased, or as his guardians would let him.

We none of us went to see "*Patter versus Clatter*," after all, having all some previous engagement, so that, though it was literally given for our special amusement, we were none of us there.

I have received no less than four American letters

by the last steamer, and this, though a welcome pleasure, is also a considerable addition to the things to be done. God bless you, dearest H——. This letter was begun about three days ago, and now it is the second of April.

Yours ever,
FANNY.

[The young author of the clever play called "London Assurance" had a special interest for me from having been my brother Henry's schoolfellow at Westminster. . . . His career as a dramatic author and actor has won him a high and well-deserved reputation in both capacities, both in England and America.]

Clarges Street, Friday, April 9th.

MY DEAREST H——,

My father is just now much better; he has regained his appetite, and talks again of going out. . . .

I can tell you nothing about my daguerreotype; for having gone, according to appointment, last Monday, and waited, which I could ill afford to do, nearly three quarters of an hour, and finally come away, there being apparently no chance of my turn arriving at all that day, I saw nothing of it; and I think it was very well that it saw nothing of me, for such another sulky thunder-cloud as my countenance presented under these circumstances seldom sat for its picture to Phoebus Apollo, or any of his artist sons. I am to go again on Wednesday, and shall be able to tell you something about it, I hope.

I have not seen Mr. T——'s sketch of the children.

He is in high delight with it himself, I believe; and, moreover, has undertaken, in the plenitude of his artistical enthusiasm, to steal a likeness of me, putting me in a great arm-chair, with S—— standing on one side for tragedy, and F—— perched on the opposite arm of the chair for comedy.

Lane was to have come here to draw the children this very evening; but it is half-past ten and he has not been, and of course is not coming. . . .

Good-bye, dear.

Ever affectionately yours,

FANNY.

Clarges Street, Monday, May 3rd, 1841.

Thank you, dearest H——, for your prompt compliance with my request about your travelling information. . . . About the daguerreotype, you know, I should have precisely the same objection to taking another person's appointed time that I have to mine being appropriated by somebody else; but Emily has made another appointment for me: she had made one for the day on which my sister arrived, which rather provoked me; but I was resigned, nevertheless, because I had told her I would go at any time she chose to name. She let me off, however; not, I believe, from any compassion for me, but because my father had set his heart upon my going with him to the private view of the new exhibition, just a quarter of an hour after the time I was to have been at the daguerreotypist's. So to the gallery I went, an hour after Adelaide had returned from Italy; as you know, I had not seen her for several years (indeed, not since my marriage). And

so to the gallery I went, with buzzing in my ears and dizziness in my eyes, and an hysterical choking, which made me afraid to open my lips. Why my father was so anxious to go to this exhibition I hardly know; but I went to please him, and came back to please myself, without having an idea of a single picture in the whole collection. Emily has now made another appointment for me, or rather for you, early on Wednesday morning, and I hope we shall accomplish something at last.

Now you want to know something about Adelaide. There she sits in the next room at the piano, singing sample-singing, and giving a taste of her quality to Charles Greville, who, you know, is an influential person in all sorts of matters, and to whom Henry has written about her merits, and probable acceptability with the fashionable musical world. She is singing most beautifully, and the passionate words of love, longing, grief, and joy burst through that utterance of musical sound, and light up her whole countenance with a perfect blaze of emotion. As for me, the tears stream over my face all the time, and I can hardly prevent myself from sobbing aloud. . . . She has grown very large, I think almost as large as I remember my mother; she looks very well and very handsome, and has acquired something completely foreign in her tone and manner, and even accent. . . . She complains of the darkness of our skies and the dullness of our mode of life here as intolerable and oppressive to the last degree. . . .

I cannot believe happiness to be the purpose of life, for when was anything ordained with an

unattainable purpose? . . . But life, which, but for duty, seems always sad enough to me, appears sadder than usual when I try to look at it from the point of view of the happiness it contains.

The children are well ; Lane has taken a charming likeness of them, of which I promise you a copy. God bless you, dearest H——. I do not lean on human love ; I do not depend or reckon on it ; nor have I ever *mistaken* any human being for my *best friend*.

Affectionately yours,

FANNY.

Clarges Street, May 21st.

DEAREST H——,

From the midst of this musical Maelstrom I send you a voice, which, if heard, instead of read, would be lamentable enough. We are lifted off our feet by the perfect torrent of engagements, of visits, of going out and receiving ; our house is full, from morning till night, of people coming to sing with or listen to my sister. How her strength is to resist the demands made upon it by the violent emotions she is perpetually expressing, or how any human throat is to continue pouring out such volumes of sound without rest or respite passes my comprehension. Now, let me tell you how I am surrounded at this minute while I write to you. At my very table sit Trelawney and Charles Young, talking to me and to each other ; further on, towards my father, Mr. G—— C—— ; and an Italian singer on one side of my sister ; and on the other, an Italian painter, who has brought letters of introduction to us ; then Mary Anne Thackeray ; . . .

furthermore, the door has just closed upon an English youth of the name of B——, who sings almost as well as an Italian, and with whom my sister has been singing her soul out for the last two hours. . . . We dined yesterday with the Francis Egertons; to-morrow evening we have a gathering here, with, I beg you to believe, nothing under the rank of a viscount, Beauforts, Normanbys, Wiltons, *illustrissimi tutti quanti*. Friday, my sister sings at the Palace, and we are all enveloped in a golden cloud of fashionable hard work, which rather delights my father; which my sister lends herself to, complaining a little of the trouble, fatigue, and late hours; but thinking it for the interest of her future public career, and always becoming rapt and excited beyond all other considerations in her own capital musical performances. . . . As for me, I am rather bewildered by the whirl in which we live, which I find rather a trying contrast to my late solitary existence in America. . . . The incessant music wears upon my nerves a great deal; but chiefly, I think, because half the time I am not able to listen to it quietly, and it distracts me while I am obliged to attend to other things. But indeed, often, when I can give my undivided attention to it, my sister's singing excites me to such a degree that I am obliged, after crying my bosom full of tears, to run out of the room.

My father continues in wonderful good looks and spirits. . . . Here, dear H——, a long interruption. . . . We are off to St. John's Wood, to dine with the Procters: — is not ready; my sister is lying on the sofa, reading aloud an Italian letter to me; the children

are rioting about the room like a couple of little maniacs, and I feel inclined to endorse Macbeth's opinion of life, that it is all sound and fury and signifying nothing. . . . Thus far, and another interruption; and now it is to-morrow, and Lady Grey and Lady G—— have just gone out of the room, and Chauncy Hare Townsend has just come in, followed by his mesmeric German patient, who is going to perform his magnetic magic for us. I think I will let him try what sort of a subject I should be.

I enclose a little note and silk chain, brought for you from America by Miss Fanny Appleton [afterwards Mrs. Longfellow], who has just arrived in London, to the great joy of her sister. I suppose these tokens come to you from the Sedgwicks. I have a little box which poor C—— S—— bought from Catherine for you—a delicate carved wooden casket, that I have not sent to you because I was afraid it would be broken, by any post or coach conveyance. Tell me about this, how I shall send it to you. I have obtained too for you that German book which I delight in so very much, Richter's "Fruit, Flower, and Thorn Pieces," and which, in the midst of much that is probably too German, in thought, feeling, and expression, to meet with your entire sympathy, will, I think, furnish you with sweet and pleasant thoughts for a while; I scarce know anything that I like much better.

I was going to see Rachel this evening, but my brother and his wife having come up to town for the day, I do not think we ought all to go out and leave them; so that —— is gone with Adelaide and Lady M——, and I shall seize this quiet chance for writing

to Emily, to whom I have not yet contrived to send a word, since she left town. God bless you.

Ever yours,

FANNY.

[The young lad Alexis, to whom I have referred in this letter, was, I think, one of the first of the long train of mesmerists, magnetizers, spiritualists, charlatans, cheats, and humbugs who subsequently appealed to the notice and practised on the credulity of London society. Mr. Chauncy Hare Townsend was an enthusiastic convert to the theory of animal magnetism, and took about with him, to various houses, this German boy, whose exhibition of mesmeric phenomena was the first I ever witnessed. Mr. Townsend had almost insisted upon our receiving this visit, and we accordingly assembled in the drawing-room, to witness the powers of Alexis. We were all of us sceptical, one of our party so incurably so, that after each exhibition of clairvoyance given by Alexis, and each exclamation of Mr. Townsend's: "There now, you see that?" he merely replied, with the most imperturbable phlegm, "Yes, I see it, but I don't believe it." The clairvoyant power of the young man consisted principally in reading passages from books presented to him while under the influence of the mesmeric sleep, into which he had been thrown by Mr. Townsend, and with which he was previously unacquainted. The results were certainly sufficiently curious, though probably neither marvellous nor unaccountable. To make sure that his eyes were really effectually closed, cotton-wool was laid over them, and a broad, tight bandage placed upon them ;

during another trial the hands of our chief sceptic were placed upon his eyelids, so as effectually to keep them completely closed, in spite of which he undoubtedly read out of a book held up before him above his eyes, and rather on a level with his forehead; nor can I remember any instance in which he appeared to find any great difficulty in doing so, except when a book suddenly fetched from another room was opened before him, when he hesitated and expressed incapacity, and then said, "The book is French;" which it was.

Believing entirely in a sort of hitherto undefined, and possibly undefinable, physical influence, by which the nervous system of one person may be affected by that of another, by special exercise of will and effort, so as to produce an almost absolute temporary subserviency of the whole nature to the force by which it is acted upon, and therefore thinking it extremely possible, and not improbable, that many of the instances of mesmeric influence I have heard related had some foundation in truth, I have, nevertheless, kept entirely aloof from the whole subject, never voluntarily attended any exhibitions of such phenomena, and regarded the whole series of experiments and experiences and pretended marvels of the numerous adepts in mesmerism, with contempt and disgust—contempt for the crass ignorance and glaring dishonesty involved in their practices; and disgust, because of the moral and physical mischief their absurd juggleries were likely to produce, and in many instances did produce, upon subjects as ignorant, but less dishonest, than the charlatans by whom they were duped.

The thing having, in my opinion, a very probable

existence, possibly a physical force of considerable effect, and not thoroughly ascertained or understood nature, the experiments people practised and lent themselves to appeared to me exactly as wise and as becoming as if they had drunk so much brandy or eaten so much opium or hasheesh, by way of trying the effect of these drugs upon their constitution; with this important difference, that the magnetic experiments severely tested the nervous system of both patient and operator, and had, besides, an indefinite element of moral importance, in the attempted control of one human will by another, through physical means, which appeared to me to place all such experiments at once among things forbidden to rational and responsible agents.

I am now speaking only of the early developments of physical phenomena exhibited by the first magnetizers and mesmerizers—the conjurors by passes and somnolence, and other purely physical processes; the crazy and idiotic performances of their successors, the so-called spiritualists, with their grotesque and disgusting pretence of intercourse with the spirits of the dead through the legs of their tables and chairs, seemed to me the most melancholy testimony to an utter want of faith in things spiritual, of belief in God and Christ's teaching, and a pitiful craving for such a faith, as well as to the absence of all rational common sense, in the vast numbers of persons deluded by such processes. In this aspect (the total absence of right reason and real religion demonstrated by these ludicrous and blasphemous juggleries in our Christian communities), that which was farcical in the lowest

degree became tragical in the highest. I only witnessed this one mesmeric exhibition, on the occasion of this visit paid to us by Mr. Townsend and Alexis, until several years afterwards, in the house of my excellent friend, Mr. Combe, in Edinburgh, when I was one of a party called upon to witness some experiments of the same kind. I was staying with Mr. Combe and my cousin Cecilia, when one evening their friend, Mrs. Crow, authoress of more than one book, I believe, and of a collection of supernatural horrors, of stories of ghosts, apparitions, etc., etc., called "The Night Side of Nature" (the lady had an evident sympathy for the absurd and awful), came, bringing with her a Dr. Lewis, a negro gentleman, who was creating great excitement in Edinburgh by his advocacy of the theories of mesmerism, and his own powers of magnetizing. Mrs. Crow had threatened Mr. and Mrs. Combe with a visit from this *professor*, and though neither of them had the slightest tendency to belief in any such powers as those Dr. Lewis laid claim to, they received him with kindly courtesy, and consented, with the amused indifference of scepticism, to be spectators of his experiments. Under these circumstances, great as was my antipathy to the whole thing, I did not like to raise any objection to it or to leave the room, which would have been a still more marked expression of my feeling; so I sat down with the rest of the company round the drawing-room table, Mr. and Mrs. Combe, Dr. Lewis, Mrs. Crow, our friend Professor William Gregory, and Dr. Becker—the latter gentleman a man of science, brother, I think, to Prince Albert's private librarian—who was to be the subject of Dr.

Lewis's experiments, having already lent himself for the same purpose to that gentleman, and been pronounced highly sensitive to the magnetic influence.

I sat by Dr. Becker, and opposite to Dr. Lewis, with the width of the table between us. What ulterior processes were to be exhibited I do not know, but the first result to be obtained was to throw Dr. Becker into a mesmeric state of somnolence, under the influence of the operator. The latter presently began his experiment, and, drawing entirely from his coat and shirt sleeve a long, lithe, black hand, the finger-tips of which were of that pale livid tinge so common in the hands of negroes, he directed it across the table towards Dr. Becker, and began slowly making passes at him. We were all profoundly still and silent, and, in spite of my disgust, I watched the whole scene with considerable interest. By degrees the passes became more rapid, and the hand was stretched nearer and nearer towards its victim, wavering and quivering like some black snake, while the face of the operator assumed an expression of the most concentrated powerful purpose, which, combined with his sable colour and the vehement imperative gestures which he aimed at Dr. Becker, really produced a quasi-diabolical effect. The result, however, was not immediate, Dr. Becker was apparently less susceptible this evening than on previous occasions ; but Dr. Lewis renewed and repeated his efforts, each time with a nearer approach and increased vehemence, and at length his patient's eyelids began to quiver, he gasped painfully for breath, and was evidently becoming overpowered by the influence to which he

had subjected himself; when, after a few seconds of the most intense efforts on the part of Dr. Lewis, these symptoms passed off, and the mesmerizer, with much appearance of exhaustion, declared himself, for some reason or other, unable to produce the desired effect (necessary for the subsequent exhibition of his powers) of compelling Dr. Becker into a state of somnolency—a thing which he had not failed to accomplish on every previous occasion. The trial had to be given up, and much speculation and discussion followed as to the probable cause of the failure, for which neither the magnetizer nor his patient could account. Believing in this strange action of nervous power in one person over another, I am persuaded that I prevented Dr. Lewis's experiment from succeeding. The whole exhibition had from the very beginning aroused in me such a feeling of antagonism, such a mingled horror, disgust, and indignation, that, when my neighbour appeared about to succumb to the influence operating upon him, my whole nature was roused to such a state of active opposition to the process I was witnessing, that I determined, if there was power in human will to make itself felt by mere silent concentrated effort of purpose, I would prevent Dr. Lewis from accomplishing his end; and it seemed to me, as I looked at him, as if my whole being had become absorbed in my determination to defeat his endeavour to set Dr. Becker to sleep. The nervous tension I experienced is hardly to be described, and I firmly believe that I accomplished my purpose. I was too much exhausted, after we left the table, to speak, and too disagreeably affected by the whole scene to wish to do so.

The next day I told Mr. Combe of my counter-magnetizing, or rather neutralizing, experiment, by which he was greatly amused ; but I do not think he cared to enter upon any investigation of the subject, feeling little interested in it, and having been rather surprised into this exhibition of it by Mrs. Crow's bringing Dr. Lewis to his house. That lady being undoubtedly an admirable subject for all such experiments, having what my dear Mr. Combe qualified as "a most preposterous organ of wonder;" for which, poor woman, I suppose she paid the penalty in a terrible nervous seizure, a fit of temporary insanity, during which she imagined that she received a visit from the Virgin Mary and our Saviour, both of whom commanded her to go without any clothes on into the streets of Edinburgh, and walk a certain distance in that condition, in reward for which the sins and sufferings of the whole world would be immediately alleviated. Upon her demurring to fulfil this mandate, she received the further assurance that if she took her card-case in her right hand and her pocket-handkerchief in her left, her condition of nudity would be entirely unobserved by any one she met. Under the influence of her diseased fancy, Mrs. Crow accordingly went forth, with nothing on but a pair of boots, and being immediately rescued from the terrible condition of mad exposure, in which she had already made a few paces in the street where she lived, and carried back into her house, she exclaimed, "Oh, I must have taken my card-case and my handkerchief in the wrong hands, otherwise nobody would have seen me." She recovered entirely from this curious attack

of hallucination, and I met her in society afterwards, perfectly restored to her senses.

On one occasion I allowed myself to be persuaded into testing my own powers of mesmerizing, by throwing a young friend into a magnetic sleep. I succeeded with considerable difficulty, and the next day experienced great nervous exhaustion, which, I think, was the consequence of her having; as she assured me she had, resisted with the utmost effort of her will my endeavour to put her to sleep. As I disapproved, however, of all such experiments, this is the only one I ever tried.

My belief in the reality of the influence was a good deal derived from my own experience, which was that of an invariable tendency to sleep in the proximity of certain persons of whom I was particularly fond. I used to sit at Mrs. Harry Siddons's feet, and she had hardly laid her hand upon my head before it fell upon her knees, and I was in a profound slumber. My friend Miss S——'s neighbourhood had the same effect upon me, and when we were not engaged in furious discussion, I was very apt to be fast asleep whenever I was near her. E—— S—— relieved me of an intense tooth-ache once, by putting me to sleep with a few mesmeric passes, and I have, moreover, more than once, immediately after violent nervous excitement, been so overcome with drowsiness as to be unable to move. I remember a most ludicrous instance of this occurring to me in the church of Stratford-upon-Avon, when standing before Shakespeare's tomb, and looking intensely at his monument, I became so overpowered with sleep that I could hardly rouse myself enough

to leave the church, and I begged very hard to be allowed to sleep out my sleep, then and there, upon the stones under which he lay.

After extreme distress of mind, I have sometimes slept a whole day and night without waking; and once, when overcome with anguish, slept, with hardly an hour's interval at a time, the greater part of a week. The drowsiness inspired me by some of my friends I attribute entirely to physical sympathy; others, of whom I was nearly as fond, never affected me in this manner in the slightest degree. I have often congratulated myself upon the fact that I had by no means an equal tendency to physical antipathy, though, in common with most other people I suppose, I have had some experience of that also. My very dear and excellent friend — always *m'agaçait les nerfs*, as French people say, though I was deeply attached to her and very fond of her society. Mrs. —, of whose excellence I had the most profound conviction, and who was generally esteemed perfectly charming by her intimates, affected me with such a curious intuitive revulsion, that the first time she came and sat down by me I was obliged to get up and leave the room — indeed, the house. Two men of our acquaintance, remarkable for their general attractiveness and powers of pleasing, — and —, were never in the same room ten minutes with me without my becoming perfectly chilled through, as though I had suddenly had the door of an ice-house opened upon me. They were entirely dissimilar men in every respect. . . .

Of the spiritualistic performances of Messrs. Hume, Foster, etc., etc., I never was a witness. An intimate

acquaintance of mine, who knew Hume well, assured me that she knew him to be an impostor, adding at the same time, "But I also know him to be clair-voyant," which seemed to me mere tautology.

My sister and Charles Greville, having had their curiosity excited by some of the reports of Mr. Foster's performances, agreed to go together to visit him, and having received an appointment for a *séance*, went to his house. Certainly, if Mr. Foster had taken in either of those two customers of his, it would have gone near converting me. Charles Greville, who was deaf, and spoke rather loud in consequence of that infirmity, said, as he entered, to my sister, "I shall ask him about my mother." Adelaide, quite determined to test the magician's powers to the utmost, replied, with an air of concern, as if shocked at the idea, "Oh no, don't do that; it is too dreadful." However, this suggestion of course not being thrown away upon Mr. Foster, Charles Greville desired to be put in communication with the spirit of his mother, which was accordingly duly done by the operator, and various messages were delivered, as purporting to come from the spirit of Lady Charlotte Greville to her son. After this farce had gone on for a little while, Charles Greville turned to my sister, with perfect composure, and said, "Well, now perhaps you had better ask him to tell you something about your mother, because, you know, mine is not dead." The *séance* of course proceeded no further. At an earlier period of it, as they were sitting round a table, Mr. Foster desired that written names might be furnished him of the persons with whose spirits communication might be

desired. Among the names written down for this purpose by my sister were several foreign, Italian and German, names, with which she felt very sure Mr. Foster could not possibly have any acquaintance; indeed, it was beyond all question that he never could have heard of them. Adelaide was sitting next to him, watching his operations with extreme attention, and presently observed him very dexterously convey several of these foreign names into his sleeve, and from thence to the ground under the table. After a little while, Mr. Foster observed that, singularly enough, several of the names he had received were now missing, and by some extraordinary means had disappeared entirely from among the rest. "Oh yes," said my sister very quietly, "but they are only under the table, just where you put them a little while ago." With such subjects of course Mr. Foster performed no miracles.

Some years ago a new form of these objectionable practices came into vogue, and one summer, going up into Massachusetts, I found the two little mountain villages of Lenox and Stockbridge possessed, in the proper sense of the term, by a devil of their own making, called "Planchette." A little heart-shaped piece of wood, running upon castors, and that could almost be moved with a breath, and carrying along a sheet of paper, over which it was placed, a pencil was supposed to write, on its own inspiration, communications in reply to the person's thoughts whose fingertips were to rest above, without giving any impulse to the board. Of course a hand, held in this constrained attitude, is presently compelled to rest itself by some

slight pressure ; the effort to steady it, and the nervous effort not to press upon the machine, producing inevitably in the wrist aching weariness, and in the fingers every conceivable tendency to nervous twitching. Add to this the intense conviction of the foolish folk, half of them hysterical women, that their concentrated effort of will was, in combination with a mysterious supernatural agency, to move the board ; and the board naturally not only moved but, carrying the pencil along with it, wrote the answers required and desired by the credulous consulters of the wooden oracle.

The thing would have been indescribably ludicrous but for the terrible effect it was having upon the poor people, who were practising upon themselves with it. Excitable young girls of fifteen and sixteen, half hysterical with their wonderment ; ignorant, afflicted women, who had lost dear relations and friends by death ; superstitious lads, and men too incapable of consecutive reasoning to perceive the necessary connection between cause and effect ; the whole community, in short, seemed to me catching the credulous infection one from another, and to be in a state bordering upon insanity or idiocy.

A young lady-friend of mine, a miserable invalid, was so possessed with faith in this wooden demon, that after resisting repeated entreaties on her part to witness some of its performances, I at length, at her earnest request, saw her operate upon it. The writing was almost unintelligible, and undoubtedly produced by the vibrating impulse given to the machine by her nervous, feeble, diaphanous hands. Finding my

scepticism invincible by these means, my friend implored me to think in my own mind a question, and see if Planchette would not answer it. I yielded at last to her all but hysterical importunity, and thought of an heraldic question concerning the crest on a ring which I wore, which I felt was quite beyond Planchette's penetration; but while we sat in quiet expectation of the reply, which of course did not come, my friend's mother—a sober, middle-aged lady, habitually behaving herself with perfect reasonableness, and, moreover, without a spark of imagination (but that, indeed, was rather of course; belief in such supernatural agencies betokening, in my opinion, an absence of poetical imagination, as well as of spiritual faith), practical, sensible, commonplace, without a touch of nonsense of any kind about her, as I had always supposed—sat opposite the *machine infernale*, over which her daughter's fingers hung suspended, and as the answer did not come, broke out for all the world like one of Baal's prophets of old: "Now, Planchette, now, Planchette, behave; do your duty. Now, Planchette, write at once," etc.; and I felt as if I were in Bedlam. One thing is certain, that if Planchette's answer had approached in the remotest degree the answer to the question of my thought, I would then and there have broken Planchette in half, and left my friends in the possession of their remaining brains until they had procured another.

The strangest experience, however, that I met with in connection with this absurd delusion, occurred during a visit that I received from Mrs. B—— S——. That lady was staying with her daughter in Stockbridge,

and did me the honour to call on me at Lenox with that young lady. Among other things spoken of I asked my distinguished visitor some questions about this superstitious folly, Planchette, nothing doubting that I should hear from her an eloquent condemnation of all the absurd proceedings going on in the two villages. The lady's face assumed a decided expression of grave disapprobation, certainly, and she spoke to this effect. "Planchette! Oh dear, yes, we are perfectly familiar with Planchette, and, indeed, have been in the habit of consulting it quite often." "Oh, indeed," quoth I, and I felt my own face growing longer with amazement as I spoke. "Yes," continued my celebrated visitor, with much deliberation, "we have; but I think it will no longer be possible for us to do so. No, we must certainly give up having anything to do with it." "Dear me!" said I, almost breathless, and with a queer quaver in my voice, that I could hardly command, "may I ask why, pray?" "The language it uses——" "It!—the language *it* uses!" ejaculated I. "Yes," she pursued, with increasing solemnity, "the language it uses is so reprehensible, that it will be quite impossible for us to consult or have anything further to do with it." "Really," said I, hardly able to utter for suppressed laughter; "and may I ask, may I inquire what language it does use?" "Why," returned Mrs. S——, with some decorous hesitation and reluctance to utter the words that followed, "the last time we consulted it, it told us we were all a pack of damned fools." "Oh!" exploded I, "I believe in Planchette, I believe in Planchette!" Mrs. S—— drew herself up with an air of such offended surprise

at my burst of irrepressible merriment, that I suddenly stopped, and letting what was boiling below my laughter come to the surface, I exclaimed, in language far more shocking to ears polite than Planchette's own, "And do you really think that Satan, the great devil of hell, in whom you believe, is amusing himself with telling you such truths as those, through a bit of board on wheels?" "Really," replied the woman of genius, in a tone of lofty dignity, "I cannot pretend to say whether or not it is *the* devil; of one thing I am very certain, the influence by which it speaks is undoubtedly devilish." I turned in boundless amazement to the younger lady, whose mischievous countenance, with a broad grin upon it, at once settled all my doubts as to the devilish influence under which Planchette had spoken such home truths to her family circle, and I let the subject drop, remaining much astonished, as I often am, at the degree to which *les gens d'esprit sont bêtes*.

I once attended some young friends to a lecture, as it called itself, upon electro-biology. It was tedious, stupid, and ridiculous; the only thing that struck me was the curious condition of bewildered imbecility into which two or three young men, who presented themselves to be operated upon, fell, under the influence of the lecturer. I had reason to believe that there was no collusion in the case, and therefore was surprised at the evident state of stupor and mental confusion (even to the not being able to pronounce their own name) which they exhibited when, after looking intently and without moving at a coin placed in their hand for some time, their faculties appeared entirely bewildered, and

though they were not asleep, they seemed hardly conscious, and opposed not the slightest resistance to the orders they received to sit down, stand up, to try to remember their names,—which they were assured they could not, and did not,—and their general submission, of course in very trifling matters, to the sort of bullying directions addressed to them in a loud peremptory tone; to which they replied with the sort of stupefied languor of persons half asleep or under the influence of opium. I did not quite understand how they were thrown into this curious condition by the mere assumption of an immovable attitude and fixed gazing at a piece of coin; an experience of my own, however, subsequently enlightened me as to the possible nervous effect of such immobility and strained attention.

My friend Sir Frederick Leighton, despairing of finding a model to assume a sufficiently dramatic expression of wickedness for a picture he was painting of Jezebel, was deploring his difficulty one day, when Henry Greville, who was standing by, said to him, “Why don’t you ask her”—pointing to me—“to do it for you?” Leighton expressed some kindly reluctance to put my countenance to such a use; but I had not the slightest objection to stand for Jezebel, if by so doing I could help him out of his dilemma. So to his studio I went, ascended his platform, and having been duly placed in the attitude required, and instructed on what precise point of the wall opposite to me to fix my eyes, I fell to thinking of the scene the picture represented, of the meeting between Ahab and his wicked queen with Elijah on the threshold of

Naboth's vineyard, endeavouring, after my old stage fashion, to assume as thoroughly as possible the character which I was representing. Before I had retained the constrained attitude and fixed immovable gaze for more than a short time, my eyes grew dim, the wall I was glaring at seemed to waver about before me, I turned sick, a cold perspiration broke out on my forehead, my ears buzzed, my knees trembled, my heart throbbed, and I suppose I was not far from a fainting fit. I sat abruptly down on the platform, and called my friendly artist to my assistance, describing to him my sensations, and asking if he could explain what had occasioned them. He expressed remorseful distress at having subjected me to such annoyance, saying, however, that my condition was not an uncommon one for painters' models to be thrown into by the nervous strain of the fixed look and attention, and rigid immobility of position required of them; that he had known men succumb to it on a first experiment, but had thought me so strong and so little liable to any purely nervous affection, that it had never occurred to him for a moment that there was any danger of my being thus overcome.

I recovered almost immediately, the nervous strain being taken off, and resumed my duty as a model, taking care to vary my expression and attitude whenever I felt at all weary, and resting myself by sitting down and lending another aspect of my face to my friend for his Elijah.

I found, after this experience, no difficulty in understanding the state of bewildered stupefaction into which the lecturer on electro-biology had thrown his

patients by demanding of them a fixed attention of mind, look, and attitude to a given point of contemplation. I think, just before I quite broke down, I could neither have said where I was, nor who I was, nor contradicted Sir Frederick Leighton if he had assured me that my name was Polly and that I was putting the kettle on.]

Clarges Street, June, 1844.

DEAREST HARRIET,

I have not a morsel of letter-paper in my writing-book ; do not, therefore, let your first glance take offence at the poor narrow note-paper, on which our dear friend Emily is for ever writing to me, and which throws me into a small fury every time I get an affectionate communication from her on it. Our drawing-room has only this instant emptied itself of a throng of morning visitors, among whom my brother John and his wife, Mary Anne Thackeray, Dick Pigott, Sydney Smith, and A—— C——. . . .

My letter has suffered an interruption, dear Harriet ; I had to go out and return all manner of visits, took a walk with Adelaide in Kensington Gardens, went and dined quietly with M—— M——, and came back at half-past ten, to find Mr. C—— very quietly established here with my father and sister. . . .

This is to-morrow, my dear Harriet, and we are all engaged sitting to Lane, who is making medallion likenesses of us all. John and his wife together in one sphere, their two little children in another, —— and I in one eternity, and our chicks in another, their two little profiles looking so funny and so pretty, one

just behind the other; my father, my sister, and Henry have each their world to themselves in single blessedness. The likenesses are all good, and charmingly executed. I should like to be able to send you mine and my children's, but as he will accept no remuneration for them, and as time and trouble are the daily bread of an artist——

Here I was interrupted again, and obliged to put by my letter, which was begun last Thursday, and it is now Sunday afternoon. Our drawing-room has just emptied itself of A—— M—— and his wife, Mr. and Mrs. Grote, Mr. H——, young Mr. K—— of Frankfort, and Chorley. Mrs. Grote brought with her Fanny Ellsler's little girl, a lovely child about seven years old. . . .

I must tell you something of our event of yesterday. A concert was given for the benefit of the Poles, the Duchess of Sutherland condescending to lend Stafford House, provided the assemblage was quite select, and limited to four hundred people; to accomplish which desirable point, and at the same time make the thing answer its charitable purpose, the tickets were sold at first at two guineas apiece, and on the morning itself of the concert at five guineas. Rachel was to recite, Liszt to play, and my sister was requested to sing, which she agreed to do, the occasion being semi-public and private, so to speak. A large assembly of our finest (and bluntest) people was not a bad audience, in a worldly sense, for her *début*. She sang beautifully and looked beautiful, and was extremely admired and praised and petted.

The whole scene was one of the gayest and most

splendid possible, the entertainment and assembly taking place in the great hall and staircase of Stafford House, with its scarlet floor-cloths, and marble stairs and balustrades, and pillars of scagliola, and fretted roof of gold and white, and skylight surrounded and supported by gigantic gilt caryatides.

The wide noble flights of steps and long broad galleries, filled with brilliantly dressed groups; with the sunlight raining down in streams on the panels and pillars of the magnificent hall, on the beautiful faces of the women, and the soft sheen and brilliant varied colouring of their clothes, and on perfect masses of flowers, piled in great pyramids of every form and hue in every niche and corner, or single plants covered with an exquisite profusion of perfect bloom, standing here and there in great precious china vases stolen from the Arabian Nights; it really was one of the grandest and gayest shows you can imagine, more beautiful than Paul Veronese's most splendid pictures, which it reminded one of.

My sister's singing overcame me dreadfully. . . .

I must close this letter, my dear; my head is in such a state of confusion that I scarcely know what I write; and if I keep it longer, you will never get it.

Yours ever truly—

(I don't know what I am saying; I love you affectionately, but I am almost beside myself with—everything.)

Yours ever,

FANNY.

Clarges Street, Sunday, June 20th, 1841.

You know, dearest Harriet, my aversion to writing short letters; I have something of the same feeling about that hateful little note-paper on which I have lately written to you. The sight of these fair large squares laid on my table, and of at least six unanswered letters of yours, prompts me to use this quiet half-hour—quiet by comparison only, for ——, Adelaide, and little F—— are shouting all round me, and a distracting brass band, that I doat upon, is playing tunes to which I am literally writing in time; nevertheless, in this house, this may be called a moment of profoundest quiet.

I do not believe that you will have quarrelled much with the note-paper, because I certainly filled it as well as I could; but I always feel insulted when anybody that I really care for writes to me on those frivolous, insufficient-looking sheets. I suppose, if you have missed Emily's Boswellian records of our sayings and doings here, you have received from her instead epistles redolent of the sweetness of the country, whole nosegays of words, that have made me gasp again for the grass and trees, and the natural enjoyments of life. Her affectionate remembrance reaches me every day by penny post, a little envelope full of delicious orange blossoms, with which my clothes and everything about me are perfumed for the rest of the day.

You have not said much to me about the daguerreotype, nor did you ask me anything about the process; but that, I suppose, is because Emily furnished you with so many more details than I probably should, and with much more scientific knowledge to make her

description clear. I found it better looking than I had expected, but altogether different, which surprised me; because I thought I knew my own face. It was less thick in the outlines than I had thought it would be, but also older looking than I fancied myself, and it gave me a heavy jaw, which I was not conscious of possessing. The process was wonderfully rapid; I think certainly not above two minutes. I have seen several of Charles Young, which are admirable, and do not appear to me exaggerated in any respect. . . .

My father and Adelaide dined with the Macdonalds on Sunday; and Sir John, who, you know, is adjutant-general, made her a kind of half promise that he would give Henry leave to come over from Ireland and see her.

I believe the first time that S—— heard her aunt sing was one night after she was in bed (she sleeps in my room, where one does not lose a note of the music below). When I went up, I found her wide awake, and she started up in her bed, exclaiming, "Well, how many angels have you got down there, I should like to know?"

I wrote thus much this morning, dear Harriet; this evening I have another quiet season in which to resume my pen. . . . I have been obliged to give up my dinner engagement for to-day, and I sat down by the failing light of half-past seven o'clock to eat a cold dinner alone, with a book in my hand: which combination of circumstances reminded me so forcibly of my American home, that I could hardly make out whether I was here or there.

So far yesterday, Thursday evening; it is now

Friday morning. Adelaide has gone out with Mary Ann Thackeray to buy cheap gowns at a bankrupt shop in Regent Street; the piano is silent, and I can hear myself think, and have some consciousness of what I am writing about. . . .

Dearest Harriet, it is now Sunday morning; there is a most stupendous row at the pianoforte, and, luckily, there is no more space in this paper for my addled brains to testify to the effect of this musical tempest. God bless you.

Ever yours,

FANNY.

Clarges Street, Wednesday, June 23rd, 1841.

MY DEAREST HARRIET,

You asked me some time ago some questions about Rachel, which I never answered, in the first place because I had not seen her then, and since I have seen her I have had other things I wanted to say. Everybody here is now raving about her. I have only seen her once on the stage, and heard her declaim at Stafford House, the morning of the concert for the Poles. Her appearance is very striking: she is of a very good height; too thin for beauty, but not for dignity or grace; her want of chest and breadth indeed almost suggest a tendency to pulmonary disease, coupled with her pallor and her youth (she is only just twenty). Her voice is the most remarkable of her natural qualifications for her vocation, being the deepest and most sonorous voice I ever heard from a woman's lips: it wants brilliancy, variety, and tenderness; but it is like a fine, deep-toned bell, and

expresses admirably the passions in the delineation of which she excels—scorn, hatred, revenge, vitriolic irony, concentrated rage, seething jealousy, and a fierce love which seems in its excess allied to all the evil which sometimes springs from that bittersweet root. [I shall never forget the first time I ever heard Mademoiselle Rachel speak. I was acting my old part of Julia, in “The Hunchback,” at Lady Ellesmere’s, where the play was got up for an audience of her friends, and for her especial gratification. The room was darkened, with the exception of our stage, and I had no means of discriminating anybody among my audience, which was, as became an assembly of such distinguished persons, decorously quiet and undemonstrative. But in one of the scenes, where the foolish heroine, in the midst of her vulgar triumph at the Earl of Rochdale’s proposal, is suddenly overcome by the remorseful recollection of her love for Clifford, and almost lets the earl’s letter fall from her trembling hands, I heard a voice out of the darkness, and it appeared to me almost close to my feet, exclaiming, in a tone, the vibrating depth of which I shall never forget, “*Ah, bien, bien, très bien!*”] Mademoiselle Rachel’s face is very expressive and dramatically fine, though not absolutely beautiful. It is a long oval, with a head of classical and very graceful contour; the forehead rather narrow and not very high; the eyes small, dark, deep-set, and terribly powerful; the brow straight, noble, and fine in form, though not very flexible.

I was immensely struck and carried away with her performance of “Hermione,” though I am not sure that some of the parts did not seem to me finer than the



whole, as a whole conception. That in which she is unrivalled by any actor or actress I ever saw, is the expression of a certain combined and concentrated hatred and scorn. Her reply to Andromaque's appeal to her, in that play, was one of the most perfect things I have ever seen on the stage: the cold, cruel, acrid enjoyment of her rival's humiliation,—the quiet, bitter, unmerciful exercise of the power of torture, was certainly, in its keen incisiveness, quite incomparable. It is singular that so young a woman should so especially excel in delineations and expressions of this order of emotion, while in the utterance of tenderness, whether in love or sorrow, she appears comparatively less successful; I am not, however, perhaps competent to pronounce upon this point, for Hermione and Emilie, in Corneille's "Cinna," are not characters abounding in tenderness. Lady M—— saw her the other day in "Marie Stuart," and cried her eyes almost out, so she must have some pathetic power. — was so enchanted with her, both on and off the stage, that he took me to call upon her, on her arrival in London, and I was very much pleased with the quiet grace and dignity, the excellent *bon ton* of her manners and deportment. The other morning too, at Stafford House, I was extremely overcome at my sister's first public exhibition in England, and was endeavouring, while I screened myself behind a pillar, to hide my emotion and talk with some composure to Rachel; she saw, however, how it was with me, and with great kindness allowed me to go into a room that had been appropriated to her use between her declamations, and was very amiable and courteous to me.

She is completely the rage in London now ; all the fine ladies and gentlemen crazy after her, the Queen throwing her roses on the stage out of her own bouquet, and viscountesses and marchionesses driving her about, *à l'envie l'une de l'autre*, to show her all the lions of the town. She is miserably supported on the stage, poor thing, the *corps dramatique* engaged to act with her being not only bad, but some of them (the principal hero, principally) irresistibly ludicrous.

By-the-by, I was assured, by a man who went to see the "Marie Stuart," that this worthy, who enacted the part of Leicester, carried his public familiarity with Queen Elizabeth to such lengths as to nudge her with his elbow on some particular occasion. Don't you think that was nice ?

Mrs. Grote and I have had sundry small encounters, and I think I perceive that, had I leisure to cultivate her acquaintance more thoroughly, I should like her very much. The other evening, at her own house, she nearly killed me with laughing, by assuring me that she had always had a perfect passion for dancing, and that she had entirely missed her vocation, which ought to have been that of an opera-dancer ; (now, Harriet, she looks like nothing but Trelawny in petticoats). I suppose this is the secret of her great delight in Ellsler.

I find, in an old letter of yours that I was reading over this morning, this short question : " Does imagination make a fair balance, in heightening our pains and our pleasures ? " That would depend, I suppose, upon whether we had as many pleasures as pains (real ones, I mean) to be coloured by it ; but as the mere posses-

sion of an imaginative temperament is in itself a more fertile source of unreal pains than pleasures, the answer may be short, too; an imaginative mind has almost always a tendency to be a melancholy one. Shakespeare is the glorious exception to this, but then he is an exception to everything. I must bid you good-bye now. . . .

God bless you, dear.

Ever your affectionate

FANNY.

[After seeing Mademoiselle Rachel, as I subsequently did, in all her great parts, and as often as I had an opportunity of doing so, the impression she has left upon my mind is that of the greatest dramatic genius, except Kean, who was not greater, and the most incomparable dramatic artist I ever saw. The qualities I have mentioned as predominating in her performances, still appear to me to have been their most striking ones; but her expressions of tenderness, though rare, were perfect—one instance of which was the profound pathos of the short exclamation, "*Oh, mon cher, Curiaze!*" that precedes her fainting fit of agony in "*Camille*," and the whole of the last scene of "*Marie Stuart*," in which she excelled Madame Ristori as much in pathetic tenderness as she surpassed her in power, in the famous scene of defiance to Elizabeth. As for any comparison between her and that beautiful woman and charming actress, or her successor on the French stage of the present day, Mademoiselle Sarah Bernhardt, I do not admit any such for a moment.]

Bannisters, July 28th, 1841.

DEAREST HARRIET,

You certainly have not thought that I was never going to write to you again, but I dare say you have wondered when I should ever write to you again. This seems a very fitting place whence to address you, who are so affectionately associated with the recollection of the last happy days I spent here.

How vain is the impatience of despondency! How wise, as well as how pleasant, it is to hope! Not that all can who would; but I verily believe that the hopeful are the wisest, as well as the happiest, of this mortal congregation; for, in spite of the credulous distrust of the desponding, the accomplishment of our wishes awaits us in the future quite as often as their defeat, and the cheerful faithful spirit of those who can hope, has the promise of this life as well as of that which is to come.

At the end of four years, here I am again, with my dear friend Emily, even in this lovely home of hers, from which a doom, ever at hand, has threatened to expel her, every day of these four years. . . . In spite of separation, distance, time, and the event which stands night and day at her door, threatening to drive her forth from this beloved home, here we are again together, enjoying each other's fellowship in these familiar beautiful scenes; walking, driving, riding, and living together, as we have twice been permitted to do before, as we are now allowed to do again, to the confusion of all the depressing doubts which have prevented this fair prospect from ever rising before my eyes with the light of hope upon it—so little chance did there seem of its ever being realized.

Emily and I rode to Netley Abbey yesterday, and looked at the pillar on which your name and ours were engraved with so many tears before my last return to America. If I had had a knife, I would have rewritten the record, at least deepened it; but, indeed, it seems of little use to do so, while the soft, damp breath of the air suffices to efface it from the stone, and while every stone of the beautiful ruin is a memento to each one of us of the other two, and the place will be to all time haunted by our images, and by thoughts as vivid as bodily presences to the eyes of whichever of us may be there without the others. . . .

Our plans are assuming very definite shape, and you will probably be glad to hear that there is every prospect of our spending another year in England, inasmuch as we are at this moment in treaty for a house which we think of taking with my father, for that time. My sister has concluded an extremely agreeable and advantageous engagement with Covent Garden, for a certain number of nights, at a very handsome salary. This is every way delightful to me; it keeps her in England, among her friends, and in the exercise of her profession; it places her where she will meet with respect and kindness, both from the public and the members of the profession with whom she will associate. Covent Garden is in some measure our vantage ground, and I am glad that she should thence make her first appeal to an English audience.

Our new house (if we get it) is in Harley Street, close to Cavendish Square, and has a room for you, of course, dearest Harriet; and you will come and see my sister's first appearance, and stay with me next winter,

as you did last. Our more immediate plans stand thus: we leave this sweet and dear place, to our great regret, to-morrow; to-morrow night and part of Thursday we spend at Addleston with my brother; then we remain in town till Monday, when we go to the Hoo (Lord Dacre's); then we return to town, and afterwards proceed to Mrs. Arkwright's, at Sutton, and then to the Francis Egerton's, at Worsley; and after that, we set off for Germany, where we think of remaining till the end of September. Adelaide's engagement at Covent Garden begins in November, when you must come and assist in bringing her out properly. God bless you, dear. Give my love to Dorothy, and believe me,

Ever affectionately yours,

FANNY.

The Hoo, Wednesday, July 28th, 1841.

DEAREST HARRIET,

I wrote you a long letter yesterday, which was no sooner finished than I tore it up. . . . We came down to this place yesterday. I obtained Lady Dacre's leave to bring my sister, and of course I have my children with me, so we are here in great force. Independently of my long regard for and gratitude to Lord and Lady Dacre, which made me glad to visit them, I like this old place, and find it pleasant, though it has no pretensions to be a fine one. Some part of the offices is Saxon of an early date, old enough to be interesting. The house itself, however, is comparatively modern: it is a square building, and formerly enclosed a large courtyard, but in later days the open space has been filled up with a fine oak

staircase (roofed in with a skylight), the carving of which is old and curious and picturesque. The park is not large, but has some noble trees, which you would delight in; the flower-garden, stolen from a charming old wood (some of the large trees of which are coaxed into its boundaries), is a lovely little strip of velvet lawn, dotted all over with flower-beds, like large nosegays dropped on the turf; and the rough, whitey-brown, weather-beaten stone of the house is covered nearly to the top windows with honeysuckle and jasmine. It is not at all what is called a fine place; it is not even as pretty and cheerful as Bannisters: but it has an air of ancient stability and dignity, without pretension or ostentation, that is very agreeable. . . .

We left my father tolerably well in health, but a good deal shaken in spirits. . . . I am expected downstairs, to read to them in the drawing-room something from Shakespeare; and our afternoon is promised to a cricket match, for the edification of one of our party, who never saw one. I must therefore conclude. . . . Good-bye, dearest Harriet. As for me, to be once more in pure air, among flowers, and under trees, is all-sufficient happiness. I do cordially hate all towns.

Give my dear love to Mrs. Harry Siddons, if she is near you, and tell her I shall surely not leave Europe without seeing her again, let her be where she will. Remember me affectionately to Dorothy, and believe me

Ever yours,
FANNY.

'The Hoo, Thursday, July 29th, 1841.

DEAREST HARRIET,

I wrote to you yesterday, but an unanswered letter of yours lies on the top of my budget of "letters to answer," and I take it up to reply to it. The life I am leading does not afford much to say; yet that is not quite true, for to loving hearts or thinking minds, the common events of every day, in the commonest of lives, have a meaning. . . . After breakfast yesterday, we took up Lady Dacre's translations from Petrarch—a very admirable performance, in which she has contrived to bend our northern utterance into a most harmonious and yet conscientious interpretation of those perfect Italian compositions. My sister read the Italian, which, with her pure pronunciation and clear ringing voice, sounded enchanting; after which I echoed it with the English translation; all which went on very prosperously, till I came to that touching invocation written on Good Friday, when the poet, no longer offering incense to his mortal idol, but penitential supplications to his God, implores pardon for the waste of life and power his passion had betrayed him into, and seeks for help to follow higher aims and holier purposes; a pathetic and solemn composition, which vibrated so deeply upon kindred chords in my heart, that my voice became choked, and I could not read any more. After this, Adelaide read us some Wordsworth, for which she has a special admiration; after which, having recovered my voice, I took up "Romeo and Juliet," for which we all have a special admiration; and so the morning passed. After lunch, we went, B——, Lord Dacre, and I on

horseback, Lady Dacre, Adelaide, and G—— S—— in the open carriage, to a pretty village seven miles off, where a cricket match was being played, into the mysteries of which some of us particularly wished to be initiated.

The village of Hitchin is full of Quakers, and I rather think the game was being played by them, for such a silent meeting I never saw, out of a Friends' place of worship. But the ride was beautiful, and the day exquisite; and I learned for the first time that clematis is called, in this part of England, "traveller's joy," which name returned upon my lips, like a strain of music, at every moment, so full of poetry and sweet and touching association does it seem to me. Do you know it by that name in Ireland? I never heard it before in England, though I have been familiar with another pretty nickname for it, which you probably know—*virgin's-bower*. This is all very well for its flowering season; I wish somebody would find a pretty name for it when it is all covered with blown glass or soap bubbles, and looks at a little distance like smoke.

Returning home, after entering the park, Lord Dacre had left us to go and look at a turnip-field, and B—— and I started for a gallop; when my horse, a powerful old hunter, not very well curbed, and extremely hard-mouthed, receiving some lively suggestion from the rhythmical sound of his own hoofs on the turf, put his head down between his legs and tore off with me at the top of his speed. I knew there was a tallish hedge in the direction in which we were going, and, as it is full seven years since I sat a leap, I also knew that there was a fair chance of my being

chucked off, if he took it, which I thought I knew he would ; so I lay back in my saddle and sawed at his mouth and pulled *de corps et d'âme*, but in vain. I lost my breath, I lost my hat, and shouted at the top of my voice to B—— to stop, which I thought if she did, my steed, whose spirit had been roused by emulation, would probably do too. She did not hear me, but fortunately stopped her horse before we reached the hedge, when my quadruped halted of his own sweet will, with a bound on all fours, or off all fours, that sent me half up to the sky ; but I came back into my saddle without leap, without tumble, and with only my ignoble fright for my pains.

We dine at half-past seven, after which we generally have music and purse-making and discussions, poetical and political, and wine and water and biscuits, and go to bed betimes, like wise folk. . . .

This morning a bloodhound was brought me from the dog-kennel, the largest dog of his kind, and the handsomest of any kind, that I ever saw ; his face and ears were exquisite, his form and colour magnificent, his voice appalling, and the expression of his countenance the tenderest, sweetest, and saddest you can conceive ; I cannot imagine a more beautiful brute. After admiring him we went to the stables, to see a new horse Lord Dacre has just bought, and I left him being put through his paces, to come and indite this letter to you. . . .

We leave this place on Monday for London, at the thought of which I feel half choked with smoke already. The Friday after, however, we go into the country again, to the Arkwrights' and the Francis

Egertons', and then to Germany; so that our lungs and nostrils will be tolerably free passages for vital air, for some little time.

God bless you, dearest Harriet. I have filled my letter with such matter as I had—too much with myself, perhaps, for any one but you; but unless I write you an epic poem about King Charlemagne, I know not well what else to write about here.

Ever affectionately yours,

FANNY.

The Hoo, Sunday, August 1st, 1841.

DEAREST HARRIET,

I wrote you the day before yesterday, and gave you a sort of journal of that day's proceedings. I have nothing of any different interest to tell you, inasmuch as our daily proceedings here are much of a muchness.

We return to town to-morrow afternoon, to my great regret; and I must, immediately upon our doing so, remove the family to our new abode. I am rather anxious to see how my father is; we left him in very low spirits, . . . and I am anxious to see whether he has recovered them at all. I think our visit to Sutton, where we go on Friday, will be of use to him; for though he cordially dislikes the country and everything belonging to its unexciting existence, he has always had a very great attachment for Mrs. Arkwright, and perhaps, for so short a time as a week, he may be able to resist the ennui of *l'innocence des champs*. . . .

I am well, and have been enjoying myself extremely

I love the country for itself; and the species of life which combines, as these people lead it, the pleasures of the highest civilization with the wholesome enjoyments which nature abounds in, seems to me the perfection of existence, and is always beneficial as well as delightful to me. I rode yesterday a fine new horse Lord Dacre has just bought, and who is to be christened Forester, in honour of my beloved American steed, whom he somewhat resembles. . . .

Considering our weather down here in Hertfordshire, I am afraid you must have most dismal skies at Ambleside, where you are generally so misty and damp; I am sure I recollect no English summer like this. As for poor Adelaide, she is all but frozen to death, and creeps about, lamenting for the sun, in a most piteous fashion imaginable.

I have had a letter from Cecilia Combe within the last two days, anticipating meeting us on the Rhine, either at Godesberg, where she now is, or at Bonn, where she expects to pass some time soon. She complains of dulness, but accuses the weather, which she says is horrible. By-the-by, of Cecy and Mr. Combe, I have now got the report containing the account of Laura Bridgeman (the deaf, dumb, and blind girl of whom he speaks), and when you come to me you shall see it; it is marvellous—a perfect miracle of Christian love.

Catherine Sedgwick's book (some notes of her visit to Europe) has just come out, and I am reading it again, having read the manuscript journal when first she returned home; a record, of course, of far more interest than the pruned and pared version of it which

she gives to the public. I am also reading an excellent article in the last *Edinburgh*, on the society of Port Royal, which I find immensely interesting. I must now run out for a walk. It is Sunday, and the horses are not used, and I must acquire some exercise, through the agency of my own legs, before dinner. I have walked two miles this morning, to be sure; but that was to and from church, and should not count. God bless you, dearest Harriet.

Ever yours,

FANNY.

Liège, Thursday, August 26th, 1841.

MY DEAREST HARRIET,

We have just returned from a lionizing drive about Liège, a city of which my liveliest impressions, before I saw it, were derived from Scott's novel of "Quentin Durward," and in which the part now remaining of what existed in his time, is all that much interests me.

I do not know whether in your peregrinations you ever visited this place; if you did, I hope you duly admired the palace of the prince bishop (formerly), now the Palais de Justice, which is one of the most picturesque remnants of ancient architecture I have seen in this land of them.

Except this, and one fine old church, I have found nothing in the town to please or interest me much. I have seen one or two old dog-holes of houses, blackened and falling in with age, which seem as if they might be some of the cinders of Charles the Bold's burnings hereabouts. We left Brussels this morning, after spend-

ing a day and a half there. I was much pleased with the gay and cheerful appearance of that small imitation Paris, even to the degree of fancying that I should like to live there, in spite of the supercilious sentence of vulgarity, stupidity, and pretension which some of our friends, diplomatic residents there, passed upon the inhabitants. . . . We went to call upon the —s, and, with something of a shock on my part, found one of the ornaments of his sitting-room a large crucifix with the Saviour in his death-agony—a horrible image, which I would banish, if I could, from every artist's imagination ; for the physical suffering is a revolting spectacle which art should not portray, and the spiritual triumph is a thing which the kindred soul of man may indeed conceive, but which art cannot delineate, for it is God, and not to be translated into matter, save indeed where it once was made manifest in that Face and Person every imaginary representation of which is to me more or less intolerable.

The face of Christ is never painted or sculptured without being painfully offensive to me ; yet I have seen looks—who has not?—that were His, momentarily, on mortal faces ; but they were looks that could not have been copied, even there. . . .

These steamship and railroad times will do away with that staple idea, both in real and literary romances, of "never meeting again," "parting for ever," etc., etc. ; and people will now meet over and over again, no matter by what circumstances parted, or to what distance thrown from each other ; whence I draw the moral that our conduct in all the quarters

of the globe had better be as decent as possible, for there is no such thing nowadays as losing sight of people or places—I mean, for any convenient length of time, for purposes of forgetfulness. I forget whether, when you left us in London, my father had come to the determination of not accompanying, but following us, which he intends doing as soon as he feels well enough to travel.

Rubens's paintings have given us extreme delight. . . . I was much interested by the lace-works at Brussels and Mechlin, and very painfully so. It is beginning to be time, I think, in Christian countries, for manufactures of mere luxury to be done away with, when proficiency in the merest mechanical drudgery involved in them demands a lifetime, and the sight and health of women, who begin this twilight work at five and six years old, are often sacrificed long before their natural term to this costly and unhealthy industry.

I hope to see all such manufactures done away with, for they are bad things, and a whole moral and intelligent being, turned into ten fingers' ends for such purposes, is a sad spectacle. I (a lace-worshipper, if ever woman was) say this advisedly ; I am sorry there is still Mechlin and Brussels lace made, and glad there is no more India muslin, and rejoice in the disuse of every minute manual labour which tends to make a mere machine of God's likeness. But oh, for all that, how incomparably inferior is the finest, faultless, machine-made lace and muslin to the exquisite irregularity of the human fabric ! . . . Good-bye, my dearest Harriet. We start for Aix-La-Chapelle at eight to

morrow. I am not in very good strength ; the fact is, I am now never in thoroughly good plight without exercise on horseback, and it is a long time since I have had any, and, of course, it is now quite out of the question. I beg, desire, entreat, and command that you will immediately get and read Balzac's "Eugénie Grandet," and tell me instantly what you think of it.

Your affectionate

FANNY.

Wiesbaden, Friday, September, 1841.

MY DEAREST HARRIET,

Walking along the little brook-side on the garden path under the trees towards the Sonnenberg, you may well imagine how vividly your image and that of Catherine Sedgwick were present to me. You took this walk together, and it was from her lively description of it that I knew, the moment I set my feet in the path, both where I was and where I was going. That walk is very pretty. I did not follow it to the end, because my children were with me, and it was too far for them ; but yesterday I went to the ruin on horseback, and came home along the rough cart-road, on the hill on the other side of the valley, whence the views reminded me somewhat of the country round Lenox, in Massachusetts, though not perhaps of the prettiest part of the latter.

I have not yet in my travels seen anything much more picturesque than the prettiest parts of the American Berkshire ; and upon the whole (castles, of course, excepted) was rather disappointed in the Rhine, which is not, I think, as beautiful a river as the

Hudson. Knowing the powerful charm of affectionate association, and the halo which happiness throws over any place where we attain to something approaching it, I have sometimes suspected that my admiration of and delight in that Lenox and Stockbridge scenery was derived in some measure from those sources, and that the country round them is not in reality as beautiful as it always appears in my eyes, and to my memory. But, comparing it now with scenery admired by the travelling taste of all Europe, I am satisfied that the American scenery I am so fond of is intrinsically lovely, and compares very favourably with everything I have seen hitherto on the Continent.

As for your friend Anne (my children's American nurse), coming up the Rhine she sat looking at the shores, her brown eyes growing rounder and rounder, and her handsome face full of as much good-humoured contempt as it could express, every now and then exclaiming, "Well, to be sure, it's a pretty river, and it's well enough; but my! they hadn't need to make such a fuss about it." The fact is, that the noble breadth of the river forms one of its most striking features to a European, and this, you know, is no marvel to "us of the new world." Moreover, I suspect Anne does not consider the baronial castles "of much 'count," either; and, to confess the truth, I am rather disturbed at the little emotion produced in me by the romantic ruins and picturesque accompaniments of the Rhine. But it seems to me that I am losing much of my excitability; my imagination has become disgracefully tame, and I find myself here, where I have most desired to be, with a mind chiefly intent upon where,

when, how, and on what my children can dine, and feelings principally occupied with the fact that I have no one with me to sympathize in any other thought or emotion if I should attempt to indulge in such.

We arrived at Coblenz one melting summer afternoon, and I walked up to the top of the fortress alone, and the setting of the sun over beyond the lands and rivers at my feet, and the uprising of the moon above, the bristling battlements behind me, filled me with delight; but I had no one to express it to.

This evening at Ehrenbreitstein, and the cathedral at Cologne, are my two events hitherto; the only two things that have stirred or affected me much. That cathedral is a whole liturgy in stone—eloquent, devout stone,—uttering so solemnly its great unfinished God-service of silent prayer and praise through all these centuries. I have seen many beautiful churches, but was never impressed by any as by this huge fragment of one.

My father, as I have written you, stayed behind, saying that he would follow us. He has not done so yet, and I do not expect that he will, for reasons which I will not repeat, as I gave them to you in a long letter which I wrote to you from Liège, which I heartily hope you have received.

[On arriving at Coblenz on a brilliant afternoon, so much of lovely daylight yet remained that I was most desirous to cross the river and ascend the great fortress of the Broad Stone of Honour, to see the sunset from its walls. I could not inspire anybody else with the same zeal, however; and under the combined influence of disappointment and eager curiosity, started

alone, at a brisk walk, and, crossing the bridge, began the ascent, and gradually quickening my pace as I neared the summit, arrived, on a full run, breathless before the sentinel, who guarded the last gates and amiably shook his head at my attempt to enter. The gates were open, and I saw, across the wide parade-ground, or *place d'armes*, where groups of soldiers were standing and loitering about, the parapet wall of the fortress, whence I had hoped to see the day go down over the Rhine, the Moselle, and all the glorious region round their confluence. "Oh, *do* let me in," cried I in very emphatic English to the sentry, who gravely shook his head. "Where is your father?" quoth he in German, as I made imploring and impatient gestures, significant of my despair at the idea of having had that stupendous climb all for nothing. "I have none," cried I, in English and French all in a breath. Both were equally Greek to him. He gravely shook his head. "Where is your husband?" quoth he in German, to which I replied in German—oh, such German!—that "I had none, that I was a woman" (which he probably saw), "only a woman, an English-woman" (which he probably heard), "and that I could do no harm to his fortress; that I had come all alone, and run half the way up, and that I could not turn back, and he *must* let me in!" He still shook his head gravely. I had the tears in my eyes, and felt ready to cry with vexation. Just then, an officer approaching the gates from within, I addressed my eager supplications in sputtering, stuttering fragments of German, French, and English to him; and he, laughing good-naturedly, gave the sentinel the order

to admit me ; when I made straight across the great parade-ground, surrounded with the masses of the huge fortification, to the low parapet wall, whence I beheld the glorious landscape I had hoped to see, bathed in the sunset,—a vision of splendour, which surpassed even what I had expected, as I looked down from the dizzy height, over the magnificent river and its beautiful tributary, and all the near and distant landscape, melting far away into golden vapoury indistinctness. I did not dare to stay long, having to return again alone ; so, thanking my kind conductor, who had evidently enjoyed my ecstasy at the beauty of his *Vaterland*, I left the fortress, stopping again at the gate to ask the name of my friendly sentinel whose resistance to my impetuous storming of the fort had been as mild and gentle as was consistent with his resolute refusal to admit me. Having not a scrap of paper with me, I wrote his name with my pencil on my glove, determined, when I returned through Coblenz, to bring him some token of my gratitude for his patient forbearance ; and so I ran all the way down and back to the hotel.

On our return, some weeks after, we visited Ehrenbreitstein with all the decorous solemnity of decent sight-seeing travellers ; and, one of a party of four, I drove in state, in an open carriage, up the formidable approach that I had scaled so vehemently before. Duly armed with admits and permits, and all proper justifications of our approach, we drove under the huge archway, where stood another sentinel, and were received with courteous ceremony by some military gentlemen, under whose escort I leisurely went over

the scene of my first visit, standing again, in more dignified enthusiasm, at the parapet where I had panted before in the breathless excitement of my run up the hill, my fight with the sentry, and my victory over him. Now, having been duly led and conducted and ushered and escorted all round, as we were about to depart, I begged, as a favour of the commanding officer, to be allowed to see again my friendly sentinel, for whom I had brought up a meerschaum of a pretty pattern that I had bought for him. "What was his name?" "Schneider." "Oh, there are several so called among the men. Should you know him again?" "Oh yes, indeed." And now ensued a general cry for Schneiders to present themselves. One after another was marched up, but without any resemblance to my friendly foe. Presently a word of command was given, followed by a brisk rolling of drums, when all the men came pouring out of the surrounding buildings, and formed in ranks on the ground. "You have seen them all—all the Schneiders," said the kindly commandant. "Ah, no! here is yet one;" and from the back ranks was pushed and pulled and thrust and shoved, perfectly crimson with shyness and suppressed laughter, one of the handsomest lads I ever saw. "Is this your man?" said the commanding officer, with a profound bow, and his face puckered up with laughing. "No," cried I (for it wasn't), quite overcome with confusion and the general laughter that followed the production of this last of the Schneiders. One of the officers then said that some of the troops had been sent elsewhere, not long after my first visit. "Ah! then," said the commandant, who had interested him-

self in my search with considerable amusement, "your Schneider, madame, has left Ehrenbreitstein." And so did we; I not a little disappointed at not having seen again the worthy man who had not bayoneted me away from the gates, when I assailed them and him in such a frenzy.]

We overtook my sister at Mayence, or rather, I and the children remained there, while some of our party went on to Frankfort, where she was. They returned to Mayence in a body: —, Adelaide, Henry, Miss Cottin, Mary Anne Thackeray, our London friend Chorley, and the illustrious Liszt. Travelling leisurely, as we were compelled to do on account of the children, I missed, to my great regret, my sister's first two public performances—a concert, and a representation of *Norma*, which she gave at Frankfort, and of which everybody spoke with the greatest enthusiasm. On the evening of the day when she joined us at Mayence, she sang at a concert, and this was the first time that I really have heard her sing in public; for I did not consider the concert at Stafford House a fair test of her powers—the audience was too limited, in number and quality, to deserve the name of a public. The sweetness and freshness of her voice struck me more than ever, but it appears to me rather wanting in power; and the same impression was produced upon me when I heard her sing in the *Kursaal* here. If there should be deficiency of power in the voice, it will, I fear, affect her success in so large a theatre as Covent Garden. . . . She sings *Norma* again to-night at Mayence, and I am going—of course without any anxiety, for her success is already established here;

and with great anticipations of pleasure—more even, if possible, from her acting than her singing; for the latter I am already familiar with, but of the former I have no experience, and have always entertained the greatest expectations of it, and I think I shall not be disappointed.

We have obtained very pleasant apartments here, and I have established Anne and the children quite comfortably; they were beginning to suffer from the perpetual moving about, and I shall let them remain undisturbed here, during the rest of our stay in Germany, and shall either stay quietly with them, or accompany my sister, if it is determined that we are to do so, to the places of her various engagements.

Since writing the above, I have seen my sister act Norma, and her performance fully equalled my expectation; which is great praise, for I have always had the highest opinion of her dramatic powers, and was, as I believe you know, earnest with her, at one time to leave the opera stage, and become an actress in her own language, as I was very sure of her entire success, and thought it a better and higher order of thing than this mere uttering of sound, and perpetual representation of passion and emotion, comparatively unmixed with intellect. To be sure, that would be to sacrifice some of her fine natural endowments, and the art and science of music, in which she has, at so much cost of time and labour, so thoroughly perfected herself, and which is in itself so exquisite a thing. . . . Her carriage is good, easy, and unembarrassed; her gestures and use of her arms remarkably graceful and appropriate. There is very little too much action, and

that which appears to me redundant may simply seem so because her conception of the character is, in some of its parts, impulsive, where it strikes me as concentrated, and would therefore be sterner and stiller in its effect than she occasionally makes it. But she has evidently thought over the whole most carefully, considered the effects she intends to produce, and the means of producing them; and it is a far more finished performance, without any of the special defects which I should have expected in so great a lyrical tragic part, given by so young an artist. I suspect, however, that the severely mechanical element in music, renders certainty in the performer's intentions necessary beforehand, to a much greater degree than in a merely dramatic performance; and thus a singer can seldom do the things which an actor sometimes does, upon the sudden inspiration of the moment, occasionally producing thus extraordinary effects. Some of the things my sister did were perfect—I speak now of her acting: they were as fine as some of Pasta's great effects, and her whole performance reminded me forcibly of that finest artist. I cannot help thinking, however, that she is cramped by the music, and I confess I should like to see her act Bianca without singing it, as I am satisfied that she would represent most admirably all characters of power and passion, and find in the great dramatic compositions of our stage, and especially in Shakespeare's plays, scope for her capacity which Italian operas cannot afford.

Her voice is not as powerful as I expected, nor as I think it would have been, if she had not striven to acquire artificial compass; that is, high notes which

were not originally in her natural register,—the great aim of all singers being to sing the highest music, which is always that of the principal female character. The consequence of this is sometimes that the quality of the natural voice is in a measure sacrificed to the acquisition of notes not originally within its compass. . . .

I have room for no more, dearest Harriet. Good-bye, and God bless you.

Ever affectionately yours,

FANNY.

I wrote you an interminable letter from Liège. Did you ever get it?

[The time we spent on the Rhine during this summer afforded me an opportunity of almost intimate acquaintance with the celebrated musician who had persuaded my sister to associate herself with him in the concerts he gave at the principal places on the Rhine where we stopped.

Our whole expedition partook more of the character of a party of pleasure than a business speculation; and though Liszt's and my sister's musical performances were professional exhibitions of the highest order, the relations of our whole party were those of the friendliest and merriest tourists and *compagnons de voyage*. Nothing could exceed the charm of our delightful travelling through that lovely scenery, and sojourning in those pleasant picturesque antique towns, where the fine concerts of our two artists enchanted us even more from personal sympathy, than the most enthusiastic audiences who thronged to hear them.

Liszt was at this time a young man, in the very

perfection of his extraordinary talent, and at the height of his great celebrity. He was extremely handsome; his features were finely chiselled, and the expression of his face, especially when under the inspiration of playing, strikingly grand and commanding.

Of all the pianists that I have ever heard, and I have heard all the most celebrated of my time, he was undoubtedly the first for fire, power, and brilliancy of execution. His style, which was strictly original, and an innovation upon all that had preceded it, may be called the "Sturm und Drang," or seven-leagued-boot style of playing on the piano; and in listening to him, it was difficult to believe that he had no more than the average number of fingers, or that they were of the average length,—but that, indeed, they were not; he had stretched his hands like a pair of kid gloves, and accomplished the most incredible distances, while executing, in the interval between them, inconceivable musical feats with his three middle fingers. None of his musical cotemporaries, Moscheles, Mendelssohn, Chopin, nor his more immediate rival, Thalberg, ever produced anything like the volcanic sort of musical effects which he did, perfect eruptions, earthquakes, tornadoes of sound, such as I never heard any piano utter but under his touch. But though he was undoubtedly a more amazing performer than any I ever listened to, his peculiar eccentricities were so inextricably interwoven with the whole mode and manner of his performances, that in spite of the many imitators they have inspired, he could by no means be regarded as the founder of anything deserving the name of a school of piano-playing. M. Rubinstein,

I presume, in our own day, represents Liszt's peculiar genius better than any one else.

The close, concise, crowded, and somewhat crabbed style of the great learned musical school of the Bachs, which may almost be called the algebra or geometry of musical composition, at any rate its higher mathematics, had certainly challenged a spirit of the most daring contrast in the young Hungarian prodigy, who electrified Paris, and carried its severe body of classical critics by storm, with the triumphant audacity of his brilliant and powerful style. Liszt became, at the very opening of his career, so immediately a miracle, and then an oracle, in the artistic and the great world of Paris, that he was allowed to impose his own terms upon its judgment; and suffering himself the worst consequences of that order of success, he achieved too early a fame for his permanent reputation. A want of sobriety, a fantastical seeking after strange effects; in short, the characteristics of artistic *charlatanerie*, mixed themselves up with all that he did, and, as is inevitably the case, deteriorated the fine original gifts of his genius. When I first heard him, he had already reached the furthest limit of his powers, because they were exerted in a mistaken direction; and the exaggeration and false taste which were covered by his marvellous facility and strength, gradually became more and more predominant in his performances, and turned them almost into caricatures of the first wonderful specimens of ability with which he had amazed the musical world.

He could not go on being for ever more astonishing than he had ever been before, and he paid the penalty

of having made that his principal aim. His execution and composition alike became by degrees incoherent acrobaticism, in which all that could call itself art was a mere combination of extraordinary and all but grotesque difficulties, devised for the sole purpose of overcoming them; musical convulsions and contortions, that for ever recalled Dr. Johnson's epigram.

In the summer of 1842, Liszt was but on the edge of this descent; his genius, his youth, his personal beauty, and the vivid charm of his manner and conversation had made him the idol of society, as well as of the artistic world, and he was then radiant with the fire of his great natural gifts, and dazzling with the success that had crowned them; he was a brilliant creature. . . .

After this I never saw Liszt again until the summer of 1870. I had gone to the theatre at Munich, where I was staying, to hear Wagner's opera of the "Rheingold," with my daughter and her husband. We had already taken our places, when S—— exclaimed to me, "There is Liszt." The increased age, the clerical dress, had effected but little change in the striking general appearance, which my daughter (who had never seen him since 1842, when she was quite a child) recognized immediately. I went round to his box, and, recalling myself to his memory, begged him to come to ours, and let me present my daughter to him; he very good-naturedly did so, and the next day called upon us at our hotel, and sat with us a long time. . . .

His conversation on matters of art (Wagner's music, which he and we had listened to the evening before) and literature was curiously cautious and guarded,

and every expression of opinion given with extreme reserve, instead of the uncompromising fearlessness of his earlier years; and the abbé was indeed quite another from the Liszt of our summer on the Rhine of 1842.

Liszt never composed any very good music; arrangement of the music of others was his specialty; and his versions of Schubert's, Weber's, and Mozart's finest melodies for the piano were the *ne plus ultra* of brilliant and powerful adaptation, but required his own rendering to produce their full effect; and by far the most extraordinary exhibition of skill I ever heard on the piano was his performance of the airs from the Don Giovanni, arranged by himself. His literary style had the same qualities and defects as his music: brilliancy and picturesqueness, and an absence of genuineness and simplicity. He wrote a great deal of musical criticism, and an interesting life of Chopin.

His conversation was sparkling and dazzling, and full of startling paradoxes; he had considerable power of sarcastic repartee, and once or twice is reported to have encountered the imperious queen of Austrian society, Madame de Metternich, with her own weapons, very successfully.

She patronized Thalberg, and affected to depreciate Liszt; but having invited them both to her house on one occasion, thought proper to address the latter with some impertinent questions about a professional visit he had just been paying to Paris, winding up with, "Enfin, avez-vous fait de bonnes affaires là-bas?" To which he replied, "Pardon, Madame la Princesse, j'ai fait un peu de musique; je laisse les affaires aux ban-

quiers et aux diplomates." Later in the evening, the lady, probably not well pleased with this rebuff, accosted him again, as he stood talking to Thalberg, with a sneering compliment on his apparent freedom from all jealousy of his musical rival; to which Liszt, who was very sallow, replied, "Mais, Madame la Princesse, au contraire, je suis furieusement jaloux de Thalberg; regardez donc les jolies couleurs qu'il a!" After which Madame la Princesse *le laissa en paix*.

Between Thalberg and Liszt I do not think there could be any comparison. The exquisite perfection of delicate accuracy, combined with extraordinary lightness and velocity of execution, of Thalberg was his one unapproachable excellence, and as near the unerring precision of mere mechanism as possible: it was absolutely faultless; but it paid the penalty for being what things human may not be—it wanted the human element of passion and pathos. His performance was a miracle of art, and left his admiring auditors pleasingly amazed, but untouched in any of the deeper chords of sympathetic emotion. He had not a spark of the original genius or fire of Liszt. Moscheles, whom I have only named with the other two because he was a highly popular performer at the same time, was a more solid musician than either of them, and infinitely inferior as an executant to both. He was the most excellent of teachers, for which valuable office Thalberg would have wanted some, and Liszt all the necessary qualifications. Of Chopin it is useless to speak: exceptional in his artistic nature and in his circumstances, he played his own most poetical music as no one else could; though his friend

Dessauer, who was not a professional player at all, gave a most curious and satisfactory imitation of his mode of rendering his own compositions. But between Chopin and any other musical composer or performer there was never anything in common; he was original and unique in both characters.

As for Mendelssohn, the organ was his real instrument, though he played very finely on the piano. He was not, however, a pre-eminent performer, but a composer of music; and I should no more think of comparing the quality of his genius with that of Liszt, than I should compare the Roman girandola with its sky-scaring fusees and myriads of sudden scintillations and dazzling coruscations, with the element that lights our homes and warms our hearths, or to the steadfast shining of the everlasting stars themselves.

Of all the pianoforte players by whom I have heard Beethoven's music more or less successfully rendered, Charles Hallé has always appeared to me the one who most perfectly communicated the mind and soul of the pre-eminent composer.

Our temporary fellowship with Liszt procured for us a delightful participation in a tribute of admiration from the citizen workmen of Coblenz, that was what the French call *saisissant*. We were sitting all in our hotel drawing-room together, the *maestro* as usual smoking his long pipe, when a sudden burst of music made us throw open the window and go out on the balcony, when Liszt was greeted by a magnificent chorus of nearly two hundred men's voices; they sang to perfection, each with his small sheet of music and his sheltered light in his hand, and the performance,

which was the only one of the sort I ever heard, gave a wonderful impression of the musical capacity of the only really musical nation in the world.

(*Wiesbaden, Sunday, September.*

MY DEAREST HARRIET,

I have already written to you from this place: one letter I wrote almost immediately after taking a walk which you had taken with Catherine Sedgwick, the year that you were here together, towards the Sonnenberg. You wrote me letters from here too, which I received up at Lenox, and read at a window looking out over a landscape very much resembling the neighbourhood of this place. I remember your epistolary accounts of Wiesbaden were not very favourable: you did not like its watering-place aspect and fashions; and neither should I, if I was in any way mixed up with them. But we have hitherto none of us taken the waters; we have pretty and comfortable rooms, with the slight drawback of hearing our neighbours washing their hands and brushing their teeth, and drawing the natural conclusion as to the reciprocity of communications we make to them. We are at the Quatre Saisons, and with nothing but the Kursaal and its arcades between us and the gardens; so I am not oppressed with the feeling of a town, streets, houses, shops, etc., all which lie at my back, and are never by any accident approached by me. . . .

I have gone into the baths merely by way of what the French call *propreté*, being too lazy to go and fetch a wash under the arcade, in *de l'eau naturelle*.

The water which supplies the baths in the Quatre Saisons is not by any means as strong as the *Kochbrunnen*, yet I fancied that it affected me unpleasantly, causing me a sensation of fulness in the head, and nausea, which was very disagreeable, as well as making me stupidly sleepy through the day. . . .

Last Thursday I went to Frankfort to hear Adelaide sing ; she was to perform, *en costume*, an act from three different operas, a sort of hotchpotch which, as she cares for her profession, I am surprised at her condescending to. We were not in time for the first, which was the last scene of the "Lucia di Lammermoor," but heard her in the last scene of "Beatrice di Tenda," and in the first scene of the "Norma." . . . What she does is very perfect, but I think she occasionally falls short of the amount of power that I expected. . . . And all the time, I cannot help wishing that she would leave the singing part of the business, and take to acting not set to music. I think the singing cramps her acting, and I cannot help having some misgiving as to the effect she will produce in so large a theatre as Covent Garden ; although, as she has sung successfully in the two largest theatres in Europe, the Scala at Milan and the San Carlo at Naples, I suppose my nervousness about Covent Garden is unnecessary. . . . Her movements and gesture are all remarkably graceful and easy ; she is perfectly self-possessed, and impresses me even more as an artist than a genius, which I did not expect.

I believe she will not sing to-morrow night, and, in that case, they will all come over and spend the day here, when Henry, Mary Anne Thackeray, and I purpose

ascending Wiesbaden horses and riding to the duke's hunting-seat, which perhaps you drove to when you were here. . . .

I confess to you, I cannot help sometimes feeling a little anxious about my sister's success in England, especially when I remember how formidable a predecessor she is to succeed—that wonderful Malibran, who added to such original genius and great dramatic power a voice of such uncommon force and brilliancy.

Good-bye. This is the third long letter I have written to you since we came abroad.

Ever yours,

FANNY.

Aix-la-Chapelle, Monday, October 11th.

MY DEAREST HARRIET,

I begin to sniff the well-beloved fogs and coal-smoke of that best beloved little island to which I have the honour and glory of belonging, and my spirits are much revived thereby; for, to tell you the truth, England, bad as it is, is good enough for me, and I am grown old and stupid and sleepy and don't-care, and think more about bugs and greasy food in the way of woe, than of vine-clad hills and ruined castles in the way of bliss. Not that I have been by any means dissatisfied with my *tower*, though rather disappointed in the one fact of the Rhine: but I am incurious and always was, and I do not think that fault mends with age; and knights, squires, and dames too, alas, are no longer to me the interesting folk that they once were.

"But it is past, the glory is congealing,
The fervour of the heart grows dead and dim;
I gaze all night upon a whitewashed ceiling,
And catch no glimpses of the Seraphim."

I think the ruins of the German hills especially excellent in that they are ruins, and can by no possibility ever again be made strongholds of debauchery, ferocity, and filth; and finally and to conclude, my dear Harriet, lights and shadows, the colours of the earth and sky, the beauty of God's creation, in short, alone now moves me very deeply, and this, I am thankful to say, is as powerful to do so as ever.

I must tell you something pretty and poetical, and which I think has made more impression upon me than anything else in the course of my travels. The other evening at Cologne, by the sloping light of a watery autumnal sunset, the wind blowing loud and strong, the river rolling fast and free, and the great, violet-coloured clouds drooping heavily down the sky, we suddenly heard the guns along each bank fire repeatedly, saluting the approach of some greatness or other down the stream. Whether it was king or kaiser, or only one of the merchant princes to whom the navigation of this stream now belongs, and who receive these honours whenever they go up or down the river, nobody could tell; and still peal after peal was fired, and one echo rolled into another from shore to shore. At length a long low boat came in sight, sweeping down with the wide current towards the city walls. She was covered from stem to stern with bright flags and pennons, and was freighted with stone, which the Duke of Hesse-Darmstadt was sending down from his quarries, to help

the people of Cologne to finish their beautiful cathedral; and as this cargo came along their shores they were saluting it with royal honours. The crane which was to lift the blocks from the boat had its great iron arm all wreathed with flowers, and flags and streamers floating from its top, which peaceful half-religious jubilee pleased me greatly, and affected me too.

At Cologne, six weeks before, we had seen the King of Hanover, Ernest Augustus, the wicked Duke of Cumberland, received just in the same way, except that the cannonading was closed on that occasion, in an exceedingly appropriate manner to my mind, by a sudden fierce peal of derisive thunder.

We went, while at Cologne, to the Museum, and there saw another beautiful thing of another sort, Bendermann's picture of the Jews weeping by the waters of Babylon—a very striking picture, sad and harmonious in its colouring, and full of feeling and expression; I was greatly impressed by it. And thus, you see, from only one of the places I have visited, I have brought away two living recollections, perpetual sources of pleasant mental contemplation. Two such treasures in one's storehouse of memory would have been worth the whole journey; but I have had many more such, and I incline to think that it is very often in retrospect that travel is most agreeable—the little annoyances and hindrances, which often qualify one's pleasure a good deal at the time one receives it, seldom mix themselves with the recollection of it in the same vivid manner; and so, as the American widow said, she thought it was a charming thing "to have been married, *and be done with it*," I think it is a

charming thing to have been up the Rhine and be back again.

I forget whether I wrote you word of my father's joining us for a single day at Frankfort, and then returning immediately to England. . . . He was not at all well, and the hurried journey was, I fear, a most imprudent one. My sister is at present at Liège with Henry, Liszt, and our friend Chorley. . . .

Good-bye, my dearest H——.

I am ever yours,

FANNY.

[My friend, Miss S——, came to us in London, and witnessed with me my sister's coming out at Covent Garden, which took place on Tuesday, the 2nd of November, 1842, in Bellini's opera of "Norma," which she sang in English, retaining the whole of the recitative. My sister's success was triumphant, and the fortunes of the unfortunate theatre, which again were at the lowest ebb, revived under the influence of her great and immediate popularity, and the overflowing houses that, night after night, crowded to hear her. Her performances, which I seldom missed, were among my most delightful pleasures, during a season in which I enjoyed the companionship of my dear friend, and a great deal of pleasant social intercourse with the most interesting and agreeable people of the great gay London world.]

Bowood, Sunday, December 19th.

TO THEODORE SEDGWICK, ESQ.

MY DEAR THEODORE,

I cannot conceive how it happens that a letter of yours, dated the 8th September, should have reached me only a fortnight ago in London. Either it must have been forgotten after written, and not sent for some time, or Messrs. Haruden and Co.'s *Express* is the slowest known conveyance in the world. However that may be, the letter and the Philadelphia Bank statement did arrive safe at last, and my father desires me to thank you particularly for your kindness in sending it to him. Not, indeed, that it is peculiarly consolatory in itself, inasmuch as it confirms our worst apprehensions about the fate of all moneys lodged in that disastrous institution. But perhaps it is better to have a term put to one's uncertainty, even by the positive conviction of misfortune not to be averted. My father's property in that bank—"The United States Bank"—was considerable for him, and had been hardly-earned money. I understand from him that my share of our American earnings are in the New Orleans Banks, which, though they pay no dividends, and have not done so for some time past, are still, I believe, supposed to be safe and solvent. . . .

We are staying just now with Lord and Lady Lansdowne, in this pleasant home of theirs—a home of terrestrial delights. Inside the house, all is tasteful and intellectual magnificence—such pictures! such statues! And outside, a charming English landscape, educated with consummate taste into the very perfection of apparently natural beauty. . . . They are amiable,

good, pleasant, and every way distinguished people, and I like them very much. He, as you know, is one of our leading Whig statesmen, a munificent patron of the arts and literature, a man of the finest taste and cultivation, at whose house eminences of all sorts are cordially received. Lady Lansdowne is a specimen Englishwoman of her class, refined, intelligent, well-bred, and most charming. I believe Lord Lansdowne was kindly civil to your aunt Catherine when she was in London; I wish she could have seen this enchanting place of his.

Rogers, Moore, and a parcel of choice *beaux esprits*, are staying here; but, to tell you a fact which probably accuses me of stupidity, they are so incessantly clever, witty, and brilliant, that they every now and then give me a brain-ache.

I do not know the exact depth of your patience, but I have an idea that it has a bottom, therefore I think it expedient not to pursue *crossing* any further with you.

Give my kindest love to Sarah, and

Believe me ever, my dear Theodore,

Yours very truly,

FANNY BUTLER.

Please remember me very kindly to your mother. I sat by a man at dinner yesterday, a Dr. Fowler of Salisbury, who was talking to me of having known her friends, Mrs. Jay and Mrs. Banian, when they were in England; and their names were pleasant to me on account of their association with her.

Bowood, Tuesday, December 21st, 1841.

Did you expect an immediate answer from me, dear Harriet, or did you think your letters would be put at the bottom of the budget, to wait their appointed time? You say your thought in parting from me was chiefly to preserve your tranquillity; and so was mine to preserve my own and yours. . . . There are many occasions on which I both feel much more than I show, and perceive in others much more feeling than I believe they think I am aware of. There are times when, for one's own sake, as well as for that of others, to be—or if that is not possible, to seem—absorbed in outward things of the most indifferent description is highly desirable; and I am even conscious sometimes of a sort of hardness, which seems to come involuntarily to my aid, in seasons when I know myself or fear that others are about to be carried away by their feelings, or to break down under them. . . .

I was glad enough to get your second letter, and to know you were safe in Dublin. It was calm the night you crossed, but it has blown once or twice fearfully since.

Our visit to the Francis Egertons, at Worsley, was prosperous and pleasant in the highest degree; and we are now paying our promised one at Bowood. I must tell you a trait of Anne [my children's American nurse], who, it is my belief, is nothing less than the Princess Pocahontas, who, having returned to earth, has condescended to take charge of my children.

You know that this place is celebrated; the house is not only fine in point of size, architecture, and costly furnishing, but is filled with precious works of art, painting and sculpture, modern and ancient, beautiful,

rare, and costly. The first day that we arrived, ushered up the great staircase to our rooms, I followed the servant with wide-open eyes, gazing in delighted admiration at everything I saw. "Well," said I to Anne, "is not this a fine house, Anne?" "The staircase is well enough," was her imperturbable reply. Wouldn't one think she had had the Vatican for her second-best house, and St. Peter's for her private chapel, all the days of her life? She certainly must have some Indian blood in her veins.

This morning I took a brisk walk along the sunny terrace, where, from under the shining shelter of holly, laurel, cedar, and all other evergreen shrubs and trees, one looks over a garden—that even now, with its graceful vases, its terraces, its ivy winter dressing, is gay and beautiful—to a lawn that slopes gently to a sheet of water, losing itself like a lake among irregular wooded banks, whose brown feathery outline borrows from the winter's sun a golden tinge of soft sad splendour. Upon this water swans and wild-fowl sail and sport about; and the whole scene this morning, tipped with sparkling frost, and shining under a brilliant sky, seemed very charming to me, and to S— too, who, running by my side, exclaimed, "Well, this is my idea of heaven! I do think this might be called Paradise, or that garden—I forget its name—that Adam and Eve were put into!" (Eden had escaped her memory, as, let us hope, in time it did theirs). I was pleased to find that my Biblical teachings had suggested positive images, and that she had caught none of her nurse's stolid insensibility to beauty. . . .

We have a choice society here just now, and fortunately among them persons that we know and feel at our ease with: Rogers, Moore, Macaulay, Babbage, Westmacott, Charles Greville, and two or three charming, agreeable, unaffected women. . . .

You ask if Lady Holland is at Bowood. No, she had returned home *by land*, as they say [at the beginning of railroad travelling, persons who still preferred the former method of posting on the high-road, were said to go by land], not choosing to risk her precious body on the railway without Brunel's personal escort to keep it in order and prevent it from doing her any accident. He having had the happiness of travelling down to Bowood with her, which she insisted upon, naturally enough declined coming all the way down again from London to see her safe home; so not being able to accomplish his fetching her back to town, she contrived to extort from him a letter stating that, owing to the late heavy rains, her journey back to London upon the railroad would probably be both tedious and uncomfortable, and advising her by all means to go home "by land," which, considering that the Great Western is his own road—his iron child, so to speak,—by which he is bound to swear under all circumstances, is, I think, a pretty good specimen of her omnipotence.

She did post home accordingly, but not without dismal misgivings as to what might befall her while crossing a wood of Lord Salisbury's, where she was to be, for a short space of time, seven miles off from any village or town. I never knew such a terrified, terrible, foolish old woman in my life.

After all, she is right; life is worth more to very

good and to very good-for-nothing people than to others. My father dined with her in town while we were away, and in her note of invitation she included us, if we had returned, saying all manner of civil fine things about me; but, as far as I am concerned, it won't do, and she cannot put salt upon my tail. . . .

We returned to town on Friday. Charles Greville saw my father on Saturday, and says he is, and is looking, very well. Adelaide was gone down to Addlestone, to see John and his wife. My children—bless them!—are making such a riot here at my table, that I scarcely know what I am writing.

Good-bye, dearest Harriet. I will write to you again to-morrow.

Ever yours,

FANNY.

Bowood, Wednesday, December 22nd, 1841.

DEAREST HARRIET,

I was a "happy woman" at Worsley [a "happy woman" was the term used by me from my childhood to describe a woman on horseback], and, as sometimes happens, had even too much of my happiness. My friend, Lady Francis, is made of whalebone and india-rubber in equal proportions, very neatly and elegantly fastened together with the finest steel springs, and is incapable of fatigue from exertion, or injury from exposure.

Having an exalted idea of my capabilities in the way of horse exercise (which, indeed, when I am in my usual condition, are pretty good), she started off with me to H——, a distance of about eight miles, and

we did the whole way there and back (besides an episodic gallop, three times full tear round a field, to tame our horses, which were wild) either at a hard gallop or a harder trot. I, who have grown fat and soft, and have hardly ridden since I left America, came home bruised and beaten, and aching in every limb to that degree that I was glad to lie down—conceive the humiliation!—and was much put to it to get up again to dress for dinner; having, moreover, the consolation of being assured by Lady Francis that she had ridden thus hard out of pure consideration for me; supposing that the faster I went, the better I should be pleased. I was, besides, mounted upon a fiery little fiend of a pony, who pulled my arms out of their sockets and would not walk. However, by repeating the dose every day, I suffered less and less, and am now once more in excellent riding condition.

I remember a ludicrous circumstance of the same kind happening to me in America, on the occasion of the first ride I ever took with my brother-in-law, who was then comparatively a stranger to me. He was a Cavalry officer, a capital horseman, and hard rider; which qualities he exhibited the first time I ever went out with him, by riding at such a pace and for such a length of time, that, perceiving he did not kill himself, I asked if he was in the habit of killing his horse every time he rode out; when he burst out laughing, and assured me that he thought he was only conforming to my habitual pace.

Yesterday, I varied my exercise, for I went out on horseback with Lord Lansdowne, and finding the roads dangerously slippery for our horses, which were not

sharped, when we were at some distance from Bowood we dismounted, and gave them to the groom, and came home on foot, a distance of three miles, which, carrying one's habit [riding-skirts in those days were very long], I think was as good as four.

You cannot conceive anything more melancholy than the aspect of H——. . . . It was a miserable day, dark, dismal, and foggy; the Manchester smoke came down, together with a penetrating cold drizzle, like the defilement and weeping of irretrievable shame, and sin, and sorrow; and the whole aspect of the place struck me with dismay. The house was shut up, and looked absolutely deserted, not a soul stirring about it; the garden dismantled and out of order. Altogether, the contrast of the whole scene to that which I remembered so bright, cheerful, gay, and lovely, combined with the cause of its present condition, struck me as beyond measure mournful. . . .

You ask after the welfare of my children's nurse, Anne; and I will tell you something comically characteristic both of the individual and her nation. Here at Bowood, she eats alone with the children, as she has been in the habit of doing at home; but at Worsley, the little ones dined with us at our luncheon-table, and she ate in the housekeeper's room. Not knowing myself exactly what would be the place assigned to an American nursery-maid in the society of the servant's hall at Worsley, I inquired of her whether she was comfortable and well-treated. She said, "Oh, yes, perfectly well;" but there seemed to me by her manner to be something or other amiss, and upon my inquiring further, she said, "Well, then, Mrs.

Butler, I'll tell you what it is: I do wish they'd let me dine at the lower table. Everything is very good and very fine, to be sure, and the people are very kind and civil to me, but I cannot bear to have men in livery and maid-servants standing up behind my chair waiting on me, and that's the truth of it." She said this with an air of such sincere discomfort, that it was quite evident to me that if, in common with her countrymen, she thought herself "as good as anybody," she certainly was not seduced by the glories of the upper table into forgetting that any one was as good as she.

I was spared the discomfort of having the children in another house; for either Lady Francis has fewer guests than she expected, or she had contrived to manage better than she had supposed she could, for they were lodged under the same roof with me, and quite near enough for comfort or convenience. . . .

Thank you for your kindness in copying that account of Cavanagh for me; thank you, too, for Archbishop Whately's book, which I read immediately. There is nothing in it that I have not read before, nor certainly anything whatever to alter my opinion that the accumulation of enormous wealth in the hands of individuals who transmit it to their eldest sons, who inherit it without either mental or physical exertion of theirs, is an inevitable source of moral evil. There was nothing in that book to shake my opinion that hereditary idleness and luxury are not good for the country where they exist. An opinion was expressed in general conversation by almost everybody at Worsley which suggested a conclusion to my mind

that did not appear to occur to any one else. In speaking of the education of young English boys at our great public schools, the whole system pursued in those institutions was condemned as bad; but on all sides, nevertheless, admitted to be better (at any rate, for the sons of noblemen) than the incessant, base, excessive complaisance and flattery of their servants and dependents, from which, they all said, that it was impossible to screen them in their own homes, and equally impossible that they should not suffer serious moral evil. Lord Francis said that for a lad like his nephew, the Marquis of Stafford, there was but one thing worse than being educated at Eton, and that was, being educated at home; therefore, concluded they all in chorus, we send our boys to our public schools. So the children are sent away lest they should be corrupted by the obsequious servants, and luxurious habits and general mode of life of their parents. And this, of course, is one of the inevitable results of distinctions of classes and hereditary wealth and influence; it is not one of the good ones, but there are better.

God bless you, dearest Harriet. I wrote to you yesterday, and shall probably do so again to-morrow.

Ever yours,
FANNY.

Harley Street, London, Sunday, December 26th, 1841.

DEAR HARRIET,

I must tell you a droll little incident that occurred the day of our leaving Bowood. As I was crossing the great hall, holding little F—— by the

hand, Lord Lansdowne and Moore, who were talking at the other end, came towards me, and, while the former expressed kind regrets at our departure, Moore took up the child and kissed her, and set her down again; when she clutched hold of my gown, and trotted silently out of the hall by my side. As the great red door closed behind us, on our way to my rooms, she said, in a tone that I thought indicated some stifled sense of offended dignity, "Pray, mamma, who was dat little dentleman?" Now, Harriet, though Moore's fame is great, his stature is little, and my belief is that my three-year-old daughter was suffering under an impression that she had been taken a liberty with by some enterprising schoolboy. Oh, Harriet! think if one of his own Irish rosebuds of sixteen had received that poet's kiss, how long it would have been before she would have washed that side of her face! I believe if he had bestowed it upon me, I would have kept mine from water for its sake, till—bed-time. Indeed, when first "Lalla Rookh" came out, I think I might have made a little circle on that cheek, and dedicated it to Tom Moore and dirt for ever; that is—till I forgot all about it, and my habit of plunging my face into water whenever I dress got the better of my finer feelings. But, you see, he didn't kiss my stupid little child's intelligent mother, and this is the way that fool Fortune misbestows her favours. She is spiteful, too, that whirligig woman with the wheel. I am not an autograph collector, of course; if I was, I shouldn't have got the prize I received yesterday, when Rogers, after mending a pen for me, and tenderly caressing the nib of it with a knife as sharp as his own tongue,

wrote, in his beautiful, delicate, fine hand, by way of trying it—

“The path of sorrow, and that path alone,
Leads to the land where sorrow is unknown.”

Is that a quotation from himself or some one else? or was it an impromptu?—a seer's vision, and friend's warning? Chi sa?

I cannot help being a little surprised at the earnestness with which you implore me to read Archbishop Whately's treatise. My objection to reading of books never extends to any book either given, or lent, or strongly recommended to me. I am so fond of reading that I care very little what I read, so well satisfied am I with the movement and activity which even the stupidest, shallowest book rouses in my mind. With regard to the little work in question, you probably thought the subject might not interest me, and therefore I should neglect it. The subject, *i.e.* political economy, interests me so little that, though I have read at various times and in sundry places publications of the same nature with much attention, they, in common with other books on other subjects for which I do not care, have left not the slightest trace upon my memory; at least, until I come to read the matter all over again, when my knowledge of it reappears, as it were, on the surface of my mind, though it had seemed to me to run through my brain like water through a sieve.

I have no doubt that from my mode of talking of different peoples, under various systems of government, you would not suspect me of having ever looked into

the simplest treatise on political economy and similar subjects; but I have read most of the popular expositions of those grave matters, that the press now daily puts forth; but as they, for the most part, deal with things as they *are*, and my cogitations are chiefly as to things as they *should be*, I do not find my studies avail me much. I believe I wrote you word after reading the book you sent me, and thinking it a very excellent abridged exposition of such subjects; I still could not understand what it had to do with the theory of laws for the division of property, or the expediency of the law of primogeniture, and the advantages of the distinctions of rank, to the societies where they exist. The question seems to me rather whether these remains of feudalism have or have not outlived their uses.

By-the-by, in taking off the cover in which you had wrapped the book, I did not perceive that you had written upon it until I had thrown it into the fire. I assure you, that at the moment, I was a great deal sorrier than if the worthy little volume itself had been grilling on the top of the coals.

We returned here on Friday, and found my father and Adelaide going on much as usual. Half a score of invitations, of one sort and another, waiting for us, and London, with its grim visage, looking less lovely than ever after the sweet, tender, wintry beauty of Bowood; where one walked, for a whole morning at a time, among hollies and laurels and glittering evergreens, which, by the help of the sunshine, we enjoyed while we were there, gave the lie triumphant to the dead season.

I have been nurse almost all the day. Anne, who,

poor girl! has had a long fast from her devotional privileges, went to church, and I walked with the children to the broad gravel walk in the Regent's Park, where I took that "exercise of agony" with you one afternoon; the day was much the same too, bright and sunny above, and exceedingly muddy and hateful underfoot. The servants, having their Christmas dinner to-day, I offered to take entire charge of the children, if Anne liked to join the party downstairs. She affably condescended, and they prolonged the social meal, or their after-dinner converse, for considerably more than two hours. Since that, I have been reading to S——, and it is now time for me to dress for dinner.

Adelaide and I dined *tête-à-tête* to-day; my father dined with Miss Cottin. I have refused, because it is Sunday; Adelaide, because she is lazy; but she means to make the effort to go in the evening, and I shall go to bed early, and very glad I shall be to shut up shop, for this has been a very heavy day. How well nurses ought to be paid!

God bless you, dear Harriet.

Ever yours,

FANNY.

Harley Street, Tuesday, December 28th, 1841.

MY DEAREST HARRIET,

I wrote you two long letters from Bowood, and one crossed note since I came back to town; yet in a letter I get from you this morning you ask me when your letters are "coming to the top" [of my packet of "my letters to be answered," to which I always replied in the succession in which they reached

me]; at which, I confess, I feel not a little dismayed. However, it is to be hoped that you will get them sooner or later, and that, in this world or the next, you will discover that I wrote to you two such letters, at such a time. . . .

How can you ask me if I *play fair* with my letters? Are you not sure that I do? and, whatever may be the case with my better qualities, are not my follies substantial, reliable, consistent, constant follies, that are pretty sure to be found where you left them?

Good-bye, my dearest Harriet. I am terribly out of spirits, but it is near bed-time, and the day will soon be done. . . .

God bless you, dear. Give my kindest love to Dorothy. I am thinking of your return with earnest longing. . . . As we passed the evening at the Hen and Chickens, in the same room where I began reading you "*Les Maîtres Mosaïstes*," on our return through Birmingham from the lately formed association, your image was naturally very vivid in our memories.

I am ever yours,

FANNY.

Harley Street, December 28th, 1841.

DEAREST GRANNY,

[This was an affectionate nickname that my friend, Lady Dacre, assumed towards me, and by which I frequently addressed her], I do not mean this time to tax your forgiveness of injuries quite so severely as before, though you really have such a pretty knack of generosity, that it's a pity not to give you an opportunity of exercising it.



Here we are again in our Harley Street abode, which, by favour of the fogs, smokes, and various lovely December complexions of London, looks but grimly after the evergreen shrubberies and bowers of Bowood, which I saw the evening before I came away to peculiar advantage, under the light of an unclouded moon. I left there the goodliest company conceivable: Rogers, Moore, Macaulay, Charles Austen, Mr. Dundas, Charles Greville, and Westmacott: so much for the mankind. Then there was dear old Miss Fox (Lord Holland's sister), whom I love, and Lady Harriet Baring [afterwards Lady Ashburton], whom I do not love, which does not prevent her being a very clever woman; and that exceedingly pretty and intelligent Baroness Louis Rothschild, and etcetera. It was a brilliant party, but they were all so preternaturally witty, and wise, that, to tell you the truth, dear Granny, they occasionally gave me the mind-ache.

As for Macaulay, he is like nothing in the world but Bayle's Dictionary, continued down to the present time, and purified from all objectionable matter. Such a Niagara of information did surely never pour from the lips of mortal man!

I think our pilgrimages are pretty well over for the present, unless the Duke of Rutland should remember a particularly courteous invitation he gave us to go to Belvoir some time about Christmas—a summons which we should very gladly obey, as I suppose there are not many finer places in England or out of it.

I am sorry you have parted with Forrester [a horse Lady Dacre had named after a favourite horse of

mine]; I liked to fancy my dear old horse's namesake at the Hoo.

Give my love to Lord Dacre, and my well-beloved B—— and G—— [Lady Dacre's granddaughters]. I am glad the former is dancing, because I like it so much myself. I look forward to seeing you all in the spring, and in the mean time, remain, dear Granny,

Yours most affectionately,

FANNY.

[I became subsequently well acquainted with Lord Macaulay, but no familiarity ever diminished my admiration of his vast stores of knowledge, or my amazement at his abundant power of communicating them.

In my visits to the houses of my friends, alike those with whom I was most and least intimate, I always passed a great deal of my time in my own room, and never remained in the drawing-room until after dinner, having a decided inclination for solitude in the morning and society in the evening. I used, however, to look in during the course of the day, upon whatever circle might be gathered in the drawing or morning rooms, for a few minutes at a time, and remember, on this occasion of my meeting Macaulay at Bowood, my amazement at finding him always in the same position on the hearth-rug, always talking, always answering everybody's questions about everything, always pouring forth eloquent knowledge; and I used to listen to him till I was breathless with what I thought ought to have been *his* exhaustion.

As one approached the room, the loud, even, declamatory sound of his voice made itself heard like

the uninterrupted flow of a fountain. He stood there from morning till evening, like a knight in the lists, challenging and accepting the challenge of all comers. There never was such a speech—"power," and as the volume of his voice was full and sonorous, he had immense advantages in sound as well as sense over his adversaries. Sydney Smith's humorous and good-humoured rage at his prolific talk was very funny. Rogers's, of course, was not good-humoured; and on this very occasion, one day at breakfast, having two or three times uplifted his thread of voice and fine incisive speech against the torrent of Macaulay's holding forth, Lord Lansdowne, the most courteous of hosts, endeavoured to make way for him with a "You were saying, Mr. Rogers?" when Rogers hissed out, "Oh, what I was saying will keep!"

I have spoken of Macaulay's discourse as a torrent; it was rather like the smooth and copious stream of the Acqua Paola, a comparison which it constantly suggested to me; the resonant, ceaseless, noble volume of water, the great fountain perpetually poured forth, was like the sonorous sound and affluent flow of his abundant speech, and the wide, eventful, Roman plain, with all its thronging memories of past centuries, seen from the Janiculum, was like the vast and varied horizon of his knowledge, for ever swept by his prodigious memory.]

Harley Street, Wednesday, December 29th, 1841.

MY DEAREST HARRIET,

Just imagine my ecstasy in answering your last letter, dated the 24th! I actually *do up* the whole

of that everlasting bundle of letters, which is a sort of waking nightmare to me.

I have been within two or three of the last for the last week, and having seldom seen myself so very near the end, I had a perfect fever of desire to exist, if only for a day, without having a single letter to answer. And now that I have tossed into the fire a note of Charles Greville's, which I have just replied to, and have unfolded your last and do the same by it, *i.e.* answer and burn it, the yellow silk cord that bound that ominous bundle of obligations lies empty on the inkstand, and I feel like Charles Lamb escaping from his India House clerkship, a perfect lord, or rather lady, of unlimited leisure.

You ask me if I think letters will go on to be answered in eternity? That supposition, my dear, involves the ideas of absence and epistolary labour, both of which may be included in the torments of the damned, but, according to my notions of heaven, there will be no *letter-writing* there. As, however, the receiving of letters is in my judgment, a pleasure extremely worthy to be numbered among the enjoyments of the blessed, I conclude that letters will occasionally come *to* heaven, and always be written in—the other place; so perhaps our correspondence may continue hereafter. Who the writer and who the receiver shall be remains to be proved (it's my belief that the use of pen and ink would have made any one of the circles of the Inferno tolerable to you); and in any case, those are epistles that it is not necessary to antedate. Klopstock wrote and published—did he not?—letters which he wrote to his wife Meta in heaven. The answers

are not extant; perhaps they were in an inferior style, humanly speaking and he considerably suppressed them.

But, to speak seriously, you forget in your query one of the principal doubts that exercise my mind, *i.e.* whether there will be any continuation of communion at all hereafter between those who have been friends on earth; whether the relations of human beings to each other here are not merely a part of our spiritual experience, that portion of the education and progress of our souls that will terminate with this phase of our existence, and be succeeded by other influences, new ones, fitted as these former have been, to our (new) needs and conditions, by the Great Governor of our being. He alone knows; He will provide for them. . . .

The Coutts and Lord Strangford business (a dirty piece of money-scandal) is *nice* enough, but I heard a still *nicer* sequel to it at Bowood, the other day. The gentlemen of the party were discussing the matter, and seemed all agreed upon the subject of Lord Strangford's innocence, but while declaring unanimously that the accusation was unfounded and unwarrantable, they added it was not half as bad as an attack of the same sort made by one of the papers upon Lords Normanby and Canterbury, which, after much discussion, was supposed to have been dictated entirely by political animosity; the sole motive assigned for the selection of those two men as the objects of such an odious accusation being the fact of their personal want of popularity, and also that they were known to be needy men, whose fortunes were considerably crippled by their extravagance.

Of course, lie-makers must make plausibility one element of their craft ; but this did seem a pleasant specimen of the manufacture. To be sure, I am bound to add that this account came from Whigs, and the attack was made by a Tory paper upon two members of the ex-Government ; so you may believe it or not, according as you are Whig or Tory inclined to-day (that is to say, the motives assigned) ; the attack itself is not matter of doubt, having been visibly printed in one or more of the Tory papers. Both parties, however, have, I suppose, their staff of appointed technical and professional liars.

Good-bye, dear.

Ever yours,

FANNY.

Harley Street, Thursday, December 30th, 1841.

DEAREST HARRIET,

. . . I am a little surprised at your writing to me about my rule of correspondence as you do, because in several instances when you have particularly desired me to answer you immediately, I have done so ; and should always do so, not by you alone, but by any one who requested an immediate reply to a letter. If it were in my power to answer such a communication on the same day, I should certainly do it and, under such circumstances, always have done so. As for my *rule* of letter-writing, absurd as some of its manifestations undoubtedly are, it is not, I think, absurd *per se* ; and I adopted it as more likely to result in justice to *all* my correspondents than any other I could follow. I have a great dislike to letter-writing, and, were I to

consult my own disinclination, instead of answering letter for letter with the most scrupulous conscientiousness as I do, even the persons I love best would be very apt to hear from me once or twice a year, and perhaps, indulgence increasing the incapacity and disinclination to write (as the example of every member of my own family shows it must), I should probably end by never writing at all.

I have always thought it most desirable to answer letters on the same day that I received them; but, of course, this is not always possible; and my rather numerous correspondence causing often a rapid accumulation of letters, I have thought, when such an *arrears* took place, the fittest thing to do was to answer first those received first, and so discharge my debts justly in point of time. With regard to replying to questions contained in letters received some time back, my scrupulousness has to do with my own convenience, as well as my correspondents' gratification. Writing as much as I do, I am, as Rosalind calls it, "gravelled for matter" occasionally, and in that emergency a specific question to answer becomes a real godsend; and, my cue once given me, I can generally contrive to fill my paper. I do not think you know how much I dislike letter-writing, and what an effort it sometimes costs me, when my spirits are at the lowest ebb, and my mind so engrossed with disheartening contemplations, that any exertions (but violent physical ones, which are my salvation for the most part) appear intolerable.

But I ought to tell you about our journey from Bowood, which threatened to be more adventurous

than agreeable. We did, as you suppose, come down the railroad only a few hours after the occurrence of the accident. When we started from Chippenham, some surprise was expressed by the guards and railroad officials that the early train from London had not yet come up. Further on, coming to a place where there was but one track, we were detained half an hour, from the apprehension that, as the other train had not yet come up, we might, by going upon the single line, encounter it, and the collision occasion some terrible accident. After waiting about half an hour, and ascertaining (I suppose) that the other train was not coming, we proceeded, and soon learned what had retarded it. On the spot where the accident took place the bank had made a tremendous slide; numbers of workmen were busy in removing the earth from the track; the engine, which had been arrested in its course by this impediment, was standing half on the line, half on the bank, planks and wheels and fragments of wood were strewed all round; and a crowd of people, with terrified eager faces, were gazing about in that vague love of excitement which makes sights and places of catastrophes, to a certain degree, delectable to human beings.

I cannot help thinking, dear Harriet, that this sad accident, sad enough as I admit it to be for the relations and friends of the dead, was not so particularly terrible as far as the individuals themselves were concerned. God only knows how I may feel when I am struck, either in my own life or that of any one I love; but hitherto death has not appeared to me the awful calamity that people generally seem to

consider it. The purpose of life alone, time wherein to do God's will, makes it sacred. I do not think it *pleasant* enough to wish to keep it for a single instant, without the idea of the *duty* of living, since God has bid us live. The only thought which makes me shrink from the notion of suicide is the apprehension that to this life another *might* succeed, as full of storm, of strife, of disappointment, difficulty, and unrest as this ; and with that uncertainty overshadowing it, death has not much to recommend it. It is poor Hamlet's "perchance" that is the knot of the whole question, never here to be untied.

Involuntarily, we certainly hope for better things, for respite, for rest, for enfranchisement from the thralldom of some of our passions and affections, the goads and bonds that spur us through this life and fasten us to it. We—perhaps I ought to say I—involuntarily connect the idea of death with that of peace and repose ; delivery, at any rate, from some subjugation to sin, and from some subjection to "the ills we know" (though it may be none of this), so that my first feeling about it is generally that it is a happy, rather than a deplorable event for the principals concerned ; but then comes the loss of the living, and I perceive very well how my heart would bleed if those I love were taken from me. I see my own desolation and agony in that case, but still feel as if I could rejoice for them, for, after all, life is a heavy burden on a weary way, and I never saw the human being whose existence was what I should call happy. I have seen some whose lives were so *good* that they justified their own existence, and one could conceive

both why they lived and that they found it good to live.

Of course, this is instinctive feeling; reflection compels one to acknowledge the infinite value of existence, for the purposes of spiritual progress and improvement; the education of the soul; but my nature, impatient of restraint and pain and trial (and therefore most in need of the discipline of life), always rejoices at the first aspect of death, as at that of the Deliverer. Sudden death I certainly pray *for*, rather than *against*, and I think my father and sister were horrified and indignant at my saying that I could not conceive a better way of dying than being smashed, as we were all together, on that railway, dashed to pieces in a moment, like those eight men who perished there the other day. . . . This drew forth a suggestion that, if such were my sentiments, we had better hire a carriage on the Brighton railroad, and keep incessantly running up and down the line, by which means there would be every probability of my dying in the way I thought most desirable.

I wish you would just step over from Ireland and spend the evening with me; Adelaide and my father will be at the theatre. . . .

God bless you, dearest Harriet.

Ever yours,

FANNY.

[Some years after writing this letter, having returned to the stage, I was fulfilling an engagement at the Hull theatre, and as I stood at the side scene, waiting to go on, two poor young girls were standing

near me, of that miserable class from which the temporarily employed supernumeraries of country theatres are recruited. One of them, who looked as if she was dying of consumption, and coughed incessantly, said to her companion, who remarked upon it, "Yes, I go on so pretty much all the time, and I have a mind sometimes to kill myself." "That's running away from school, my child," said I. "Don't do it, for you can't tell whether you mayn't be put to just as hard, or even a harder life to finish your lesson in another world." "O Lord, ma'am!" said the girl, "I never thought of that." "But I have very often," said I to her, as I went on the stage to finish my mumming.

The strange ignorance of all the conditions of life (except their own most wretched ones), even those but a few degrees removed from their own, of these poor creatures, betrayed itself in their awestruck admiration of my stage ornaments, which they took for real jewels. "Oh, but," said I, as they gazed at them with wonder, "if they were real jewels, you know, I should sell them to live, and not come to the theatre to act for my bread every night." "Oh, wouldn't you, ma'am?" exclaimed they, amazed that so blissful an occupation as that of a stage star, radiant with "such diamonds," should not be all that heart of woman could desire. Poor things—all of us!]

Harley Street, January 1st, 1842.

It is New Year's Day, my dearest Harriet. May God bless you. You will, I hope, receive to-day my account of my journey home from Bowood. Any anxiety you might have felt about us was certain to

be dispelled by the note I despatched to you after our arrival, and as to the accident which took place on the railroad, I have nothing to tell you about it more than you would see in the newspapers, and it did not occur to me to mention it.

I read with attention the newspaper article you sent me about the corn laws and the currency, and, though I did not quite understand all the details given on the latter subject, yet the main question is one that I have been so familiar with lately, as to have comprehended, I believe, the general sense of it. But I read it at Bowood, and though, as I assure you, with the greatest attention, I do not remember a single word of it now (the invariable practice of my memory with any subject that is entirely uncongenial to me).

The mischievous influence of the undue extension of the credit system is matter of daily discussion and daily illustration, I am sorry to say, in the United States, where, in spite of their easy institutions, boundless space, and inexhaustible real sources of credit (the wealth of the soil and its agricultural and universal products), and all the commercial advantages which their comparatively untrammelled conditions afford them, they are all but bankrupt now ; distressed at home and disgraced abroad by the excess to which this pernicious system of trading upon fictitious capital has been carried by eager, grasping, hastening-to-be-rich people. Of course, the same causes must tend to produce the same effects everywhere, though different circumstances may partially modify the results ; and in proportion as this vicious system has prevailed with

us in England, its consequences must, at some time or other, culminate in sudden severe pressure upon the trading and manufacturing interests, and I suppose, of course, upon all classes of the industrious population of the country. The difficult details of finance, and their practical application to the currency question, have not often been understood, and therefore not often relished by me whenever I have attempted to master them; but I have heard them frequently and vehemently discussed by the advocates of both paper money and coin currency; I have read all the manifestoes upon the subject put forth by Mr. Nicholas Biddle, late President of the United States Bank, who is supposed to have understood finance well, though the unfortunate funds committed to his charge do not appear to have been the safer for that circumstance. . . . The failure of the United States Bank has been sometimes considered as a political catastrophe, the result of party animosity and personal enmity towards Mr. Biddle on the part of General Jackson, who, being then President of the United States, gave a fatal blow to the credit of the bank (which, though calling itself the United States Bank, was not a Government institution) by removing from its custody the Government deposits. My impression upon the subject (simple, as I have no doubt you would expect to find the result of any mental process of mine) is that paper money is a financial expedient, the substitution of an appearance or makeshift for a real thing, and likely, like all other such substitutes of whatever kind, to become a source of shame, trouble, and ruin whenever, after the appointed time of circulation, which every expedient has,

there should be a demand for the real article ; more especially if the shadow has imposed upon the world by being twice as big as the substance.

The papers and pamphlets you have sent me, dear Harriet, seem to me only to prove that excessive and unjust taxation, partial and unjust corn laws, and unwise financial ones (together with other causes, which seem to me ominous of evil results), have produced the distress, embarrassment, and discontent existing in this, the richest and most enlightened country in the world. . . .

I have been interrupted half a dozen times while writing this letter, once by a long visit from Mrs. Jameson. . . . Lady M—— called too, with a pretty little widow, a Mrs. M——, a great friend of Adelaide's. Dearest Harriet, here my letter was broken off yesterday morning, Friday ; it is now Saturday evening, and this morning arrived two long ones from America. Now, if I should get one to-morrow or the next day, from you, will it be very unjust to put yours under these, and answer them before I write any more to you ? I think not, but I must make an end of this. . . .

Good-bye, and God bless you.

I am, ever yours,

FANNY.

Harley Street, Tuesday, January 4th, 1842.

DEAREST HARRIET,

. . . You say you wonder that those who love and worship Christ should be wanting in patience and the spirit of endurance. Do you not wonder, too, that they should fail in self-denial, charity, mercy, all the

virtues of their Divine Model ? But this is a terrible chapter, and sad subject of speculation for all of us, and I can't bear to speak upon it.

In talking once with my sister of self-condemnation, and our condemnation of others, I used an expression which she took up as eminently ridiculous ; but I think she did not quite understand me. I said that there was a feeling of *modesty*, which prevented one's uttering the extent of one's own self-accusations, at which she laughed very much, and said she thought that modesty ought to interfere in behalf of others as well as one's self ; but there are some reasons why it does not. Severely as one may judge and blame others, it is always, of course, with the perception that one cannot know the *whole* of the case for or against them ; nevertheless, even with this conviction, there are certain words and deeds of others which one condemns unhesitatingly. Such sentences as these, I pronounce often and without scruple (harshly, perhaps, and therein committing most mischievous, foul sin in chiding sin), but one does not utter that which one feels more rarely (however strongly, in particular instances), one's impression of the evil tendency of a whole character, the weakness or wickedness, the disease which pervades the whole moral constitution, and which seems to denote certain inevitable results ; on these one hesitates to pronounce opinion, not so much, I think, because of the uncertainty one feels, as in the case of a special motive, or temptation to any special act, and the liability to mistake, both in the quality of motive and quality of temptation ; as because so much deeper a condemnation is involved in such

judgments. It is the difference between a physician's opinion on an acute attack of illness or a radical and fatal constitutional tendency. This sort of condemnation requires such intimate knowledge that one can hardly pass it upon any but one's self. One cannot tear off all coverings from the hearts and minds of others, whereas one could strip one's own moral deformities naked, and that species of self-accusation does seem to me a kind of immodesty. One naturally shrinks, too, from speaking of deep and awful things, and then there is the all but insuperable difficulty of putting one's most intimate convictions, *the realities of one's soul*, into words at all. . . .

Oh, my dear Harriet, I have told you nothing of John and Natalia's mesmeric practices [my brother and his German wife]. If you could have seen them, you would have split your lean sides more than you did at my aspect and demeanour while listening to A—— reading her favourite French novels to me.

By-the-by, do you know that that very book, "Mathilde," which I could not listen to for a quarter of an hour with common patience, is cried up everywhere and by everybody as a most extraordinary production? At Bowood, everybody was raving about it; Mrs. Jameson tells me that Carlyle excepted it from a general anathema on French novels. Some times I think I will try again to get through it, and then I think, as little F—— says when she is requested to do something that she ought, "*Eelly*, now, *me tan not*."

I am finishing George Sand's "Lettres d'un Voyageur," because in an evil hour I began them. Her

style is really admirable, and in this book one escapes the moral (or immoral) complications of her stories.

God bless you, dear Harriet. Good-bye. Time and opportunity serving, you surely see that I am not only faithful, but prompt, in the discharge of my debts.

Ever yours,

FANNY.

I forgot to tell you that my poor Margery [my children's former nurse] has at length applied to the tribunals of Pennsylvania for a separation from her cruel and worthless husband. Poor thing ! I hope she will obtain it.

[The tribunals of Pennsylvania followed, in the law of divorce, the German, and not the English precedent and process. Divorce was granted by them, as well as mere separation, on plea of incompatibility of temper, and also for cause of non-cohabitation during a space of two years. In regard to the laws of marriage and divorce, as well as most other matters, each state in the Union had its own peculiar code, agreeing or differing from the rest. The Massachusetts laws of marriage and divorce were, I believe, the same as the English. In Pennsylvania a much greater facility for obtaining divorce—adopted, I suppose, from German modes of thought and feeling, and perhaps German legislature—prevailed, while in some of the western states, more exclusively occupied by a German population, the facility with which the bond of marriage was dissolved was greater than in any civilized Christian community in the world, I think.]

Harley Street, January 16th, 1842.

At the end of a long, kind letter I received from you this morning, dearest Harriet, there is a most sudden and incomprehensible sentence, an incoherent, combined malediction upon yourself and your dog Bevis, which I found it difficult to connect in any way with the matter which preceded it, which was very good advice to me, abruptly terminating in a declaration that you were a fool and your dog Bevis a brute, and leaving me to conclude either that he had overturned your inkstand or that you had gone mad, though indeed your two propositions are sane enough: for the first I would contradict if I could; the second I could not if I would; and so, as the Italians say, "Sono rimasta." . . .

With regard to the likeness between my sister and myself, it is as great as our unlikeness. . . . Our mode of perceiving and being affected by things and people is often identical, and our impressions frequently so similar and so simultaneous, that we both often utter precisely the same words upon a subject, so that it might seem as if one of us might save the other the trouble of speaking. . . . She is a thousand times quicker, keener, finer, shrewder, and sweeter than I am, and all my mental processes, compared with hers, are slow, coarse, and clumsy.

Here my letter broke off yesterday morning, and yesterday evening I went to see the new opera, so that I shall have realities instead of speculations to treat you to. [The opera was an English version of the "Elena da Feltre," by Mercadante, whose dramatic compositions, "La Vestale," "Le Due Illustre Rivale,"

the "Elena da Feltre," and others, obtained a very considerable temporary popularity in Italy, but were, I think, little known elsewhere. They were not first-rate musical productions, but had a good deal of agreeable, though not very original, melody, and were favourable to a declamatory, passionate style of singing, having a great deal of dramatic power and pathos. My sister was fond of them, and gave them with great effect, and the celebrated *prima donna*, Madame Ungher, achieved great popularity, and excited immense enthusiasm in some of them.]

The opera was entirely successful, owing certainly to Adelaide, for the music is not agreeable, or of an order to become popular; the story is rather involved, which, however, as people have books to help them to it, does not so much matter. She was beautifully and becomingly dressed in mediæval Italian costume, and looked very handsome. Her voice was, as usual, very much affected by her nervousness, and comparatively feeble; this, however, signifies little, as it is only on the first night that it occurs, and every succeeding representation, her anxiety being less, she recovers more power of voice.

She acted extremely well, so as again to excite in me the strongest desire to see her in an *acting* part; a desire which is only qualified by the consideration that she makes more money at present as a singer than she probably could as an actress. At the end of the piece she *died*, with one of those expressions of feeling, the effect of which may, without exaggeration, be called electrifying: it made me spring on my seat, and the whole audience responded with that

voice of human sympathy that any true representation of feeling elicits instantaneously. Having renounced her lover, and married a man she hated, to save her father's life, after seeing her lover go to church and be married to another woman, her father being nevertheless executed (an old story, no doubt, but that's no matter), she loses her senses and stabs herself, and as she falls into the arms of her husband (the man she hated) she sees her lover, who just arrives at this moment, and the dying spring which she made, with her arms stretched towards him, falling before she reached him, dead on the ground, was one of those terrible and touching things which the stage only can reproduce from nature—I mean, out of reality itself—a thing that of course neither painting nor sculpture could attempt, and that would have been comparatively cold and ineffective, even in poetry, but which “in action” was indescribably pathetic. It had been, like many happy dramatic effects, a sudden thought with her, for it had only occurred to her yesterday morning; but the grace of the action, its beauty, truth, and expressiveness are not to be conveyed by words. You will see it; not that, indeed, it may ever again be so very happy a thing in its effect. . . .

God bless you, dear Harriet. Good-bye.

Ever yours,

FANNY.

Harley Street, January 31st, 1842.

MY DEAREST HARRIET,

Why do you ask me if I would not write to you unless you wrote to me? Do you not know

perfectly well that I *would not*—unless, indeed, I thought you were ill or something was the matter with you; and then I would write just enough to find out if such was the case. Why should I write to you, when I hate writing, and yet nevertheless *always* answer letters? Surely the spontaneous, or promiscuous (which did you call it, you Irishwoman?) epistle should come from the person who does not profess to labour under an *inkophobia*. And what can you righteously complain of, when I not only never fail scrupulously to answer your letters, but, be they long or short, invariably answer them *abundantly*, having as great an objection to writing a short letter almost as I have to writing any? Basta! never doubt any more about the matter, my dear Harriet. I never (I think) shall write to you, but I also (I think) shall never fail to answer you. If you are not satisfied with that, I can't help it. . . . We have a lull in our engagements just now—comparative quiet. We gave a family dinner on Friday. . . . My father, I am sorry to say, gets no rent from the theatre. The nights on which my sister does not sing, the house is literally empty. Alas! it is the old story over again: that whole ruinous concern is propped only by her. That property is like some fate to which our whole family are subject, by which we are every one of us destined to be borne down by turn, after vainly dedicating ourselves to its rescue.

On Saturday I spent the evening at Lady Charlotte Lindsay's, who has a very kind regard for you, and spoke of your brother Barry with great affection. To-morrow, after going to the opera, I shall go to

Miss Berry's. My sister and father go to Apsley House, where the Duke of Wellington gives a grand entertainment to the King of Prussia. We were asked too, but, though rather tempted by the fine show, it was finally concluded that we should not go, so we shall only have it at second hand. This is all my news for the present, dear Harriet. God bless you. Good-bye. If you ever wish to hear from me, drop me a line to that effect.

Ever yours (and the same),

FANNY.

[Circumstances occurred which induced us to change our plans, and I did go to the *fête* at Apsley House, which was very beautiful and magnificent. A pleasant incident of the evening was a special introduction to, and a few minutes' conversation with, our illustrious host; and the pleasantest of all, I am almost ashamed to say, was the memorable appearance of Lady Douro and Mademoiselle d'Este, who, coming into the room together, produced a most striking effect by their great beauty and their exquisite dress. They both wore magnificent dresses of white lace over white satin, ornamented with large cactus flowers, those of the blonde marchioness being of the sea-shell rose colour, and the dark Mademoiselle d'Este's, of the deep scarlet; and in the bottom of each of these large, vivid blossoms lay, like a great drop of dew, a single splendid diamond. The women were noble samples of fair and dark beauty, and their whole appearance, coming in together, attired with such elegant and becoming magnificent simplicity, produced an effect of surprise and admiration on the whole brilliant assembly.]

Harley Street, February 4th, 1842.

MY DEAREST HARRIET,

At twelve o'clock to-day I rang for candles, in order that the fog might not prevent my answering your letter. I was obliged to go out, however, and the skies in the interim have cleared; and where do you think I have been? Why, like a fool as I am, to *see a sight*, and I am well paid by feeling so tired, and having such a headache, and having had such a fright, that—it serves me right.

Our dear friend Harness has, as perhaps you know, an office which Lord Lansdowne gave him, by virtue of which he occupies a very pleasant apartment in the Council Office Building, the windows of which look out on Whitehall. Here he begged me to come, and bring the children, that we might see the Queen, and the King of Prussia, and all the great folks, go to the opening of Parliament, and in an evil hour I consented, Harness informing me at what hour to come, and what way to take to avoid the crowd. But the carriage was ordered half an hour later than we ought to have started, and the coachman was ordered to take us down Whitehall (though Harness had warned me that we could not come that way, and that we must leave our carriage at the Carlton Terrace steps, and walk across the park to the little passage which leads straight into Downing Street). Down Whitehall, however, we attempted to go, and were of course turned back by the police. We then retraced our route to the Carlton steps, and here, with the two children, Anne, and the footman, I made my way through the crowd; but oh, what a way! and what a crowd! When we got down

into the park, the only clear space was the narrow line left open for the carriages, and some of them were passing at a rapid trot, just as we found our way into their road, and the dense wall of human beings we had squeezed through closed behind us. I assure you, Harriet, the children were not half a foot from one of those huge carriage horses, nor was there any means of retreat; the living mass behind us was as compact as brick and mortar. We took a favourable moment, and, rushing across the road into the protecting arms of some blessed, benevolent policemen, who were keeping the line, were seized, and dragged, and pushed, and pulled, and finally made way for, through the crowd on the other side, and then ran, without stopping, till we reached our destination; but the peril of the children, and the exertion of extricating them and ourselves from such a situation, had been such that, on reaching Harness's rooms, I shook so that I could hardly stand, and the imperturbable Anne actually burst into tears. So much for the delights of sight-seeing.

As for me, you know I would not go to the end of the street to see the finest thing in the universe; but, in the first place, I had promised, and in the next, I was so miserably out of spirits that, though I could not bear to go out, I could not bear to stay at home; but certainly, my detestation of running after a sight was never more heartily confirmed.

The concourse was immense, but I was much surprised at the entire want of excitement and enthusiasm in the vast multitude who thronged and all but choked up the Queen's way. All hats were lifted, but there was not a hatful of cheers, and the whole thing

produced a disagreeable effect of coldness, indifference, or constraint.

Harness said it was nineteenth-century breeding, which was too exquisite to allow even of the mob's shouting. He is a Tory. T—— M——, who is a very warm Whig, thought the silence spoke of Paisley starvation and Windsor banquets. I thought these and other things besides might have to do with the people's not cheering.

E—— (who, bless her soul! has just been here, talking such gigantic nonsense) must have misunderstood me, or you must have misunderstood her, in supposing that I made a distinct *promise* to answer four crossed sheets of paper to four lines of yours. I said it was my usual practice to do so, and one from which I was not likely to depart, because I hate writing a short letter as much as I hate writing any letter at all. . . .

Have you received one letter from me since you have been in Mountjoy Square? I have written one to you there, but, owing to the habit of my hand, which is to write "Ardgillan Castle," the direction was so scratched and blurred that I had some doubts whether the letter would reach you. Let me know, dear Harriet, if it does. . . .

E—— must have made another blunder about Lady Westmoreland and my sister. It is not the Duke of Wellington's money, in particular, that she objects to receiving; she does not intend to sing in private *for money* at all, anywhere, or on any occasion; which I am very glad of, as, if she did, I think social embarrassments and professional complications

of every sort, and all disagreeable ones, would arise from it.

We were all very cordially invited to Apsley House by Lady Westmoreland, before my sister stated that she did not intend to sing there for money. . . . Besides this, there came a formal bidding in the Duke of Wellington's own hand [or Algernon Greville's, who used to forge his illustrious chief's signature on all common occasions], with which we were very well pleased to comply. . . .

A—— has been trying to inoculate me with Paul de Kock, who, she assures me, is a *moral* writer, and with whose books our tables, chairs, sofas, and beds, are covered, as with the unclean plagues of Egypt. I read one of the novels and began another. They are very clever, very funny, very dirty, abominably immoral, and I do not think I *can* read any more of them; for though I confess to having laughed till my sides ached over some parts of what I read, I was, upon reflection and upon the whole, disgusted and displeased. . . .

I have *precisely* your feeling about Mrs. F—— in every particular; I think her the funniest and the kindest old maniac I am acquainted with, and my intercourse with her is according to that opinion. Good-bye, my dearest Harriet; God bless you. I wish I was where I could see green fields. I am in miserable spirits, and would give "my kingdom for a horse," and the world for an hour's gallop in the country.

Ever yours,

FANNY.

[My dear and excellent friend, the Rev. William

Harness, refused from conscientious motives to hold more than one Church benefice, though repeated offers of livings were made to him by various of his influential friends. Lord Lansdowne, who had a very affectionate esteem for him, gave him the civil office I have alluded to in this letter, and this not being open to Mr. Harness's scruples with regard to sacred sinecures, he accepted. His means were always small, his charities great, and his genial hospitality unfailing. He was one of the simplest, most modest, unpretending, honourable, high-minded, warm-hearted human beings I have ever known. Goodness appeared easy to him—the best proof how good he was.]

Harley Street, February 5th, 1842.

DEAR HARRIET,

I did not care very much about the *fête* itself at Apsley House, but I was very glad to go to it upon the Duke of Wellington's invitation, and felt as much honoured and gratified by that as I could be by any such sort of thing. My sister did sing for them, though, poor thing! not very well. She had just gone through the new opera, and was besides labouring under a terrible cough and cold, through which, I am sorry to say, she has been singing for the last week. There was no particular reason for her not taking money at *that* concert. She does not intend to be paid for singing in society at all. . . . Of course, her declining such engagements will greatly diminish her income, popular singers making nearly half their earnings by such means; but I am sure that, situated as we all are, she is right, and will avoid a good many annoyances by

this determination, though her pocket will suffer for it. . . .

I know nothing whatever, of course, about the statements in the papers, which I never look at, about the financial disgraces and embarrassments in America. The United States Bank (in which my father had put four thousand pounds, which he could ill spare) is swept from the face of the earth, and everybody's money put into it has been like something thrust down a gaping mouth that had no stomach; it has disappeared in void space, and is irredeemably lost. I have seven thousand pounds in the New Orleans banks, which I have given my father for his life. Those banks, it is said, are sound, and will ere long resume specie payments, and give dividends to their stockholders. Amen, so be it. It is affirmed that Mr. Biddle's prosecution will lead to nothing, but that the state of Pennsylvania will pay its debts, means to do so, and will be able to do so without any difficulty. . . . God bless you, dear Harriet. Write to me soon again, for, though I do hate answering you, I hate worse not hearing from you.

Ever yours,

FANNY.

I am glad you liked "Les Maitres Mosaistes;" I think it charming. Thank you for your "Enfant du Peuple." I have been trying some Paul de Kock, but *cannot* get on with it.

[Of Madame George Sand's few unobjectionable books, "Les Maitres Mosaistes" seems to me the best.

As an historical picture of Venice and its glorious period of supremacy in art, it is admirable. As a pathetic human history, it is excellent; with this drawback, however, that in it the author has avoided the subject of the relations between the sexes—her invariable rock ahead, both morally and artistically; and it is by the entire omission of the important element of love that this work of hers is free from the reproach the author never escapes when she treats of it. It is a great pity her fine genius has so deep a flaw.]

Harley Street, February 11th, 1842.

MY DEAREST HARRIET,

. . . I want to know if you can come to us on the 20th of this month, instead of the 1st of March, as I expected you. I believe I told you that the Duke of Rutland, when we met him at the Arkwrights', at Sutton, gave us all a very kind invitation to Belvoir, which we accepted, and have been expecting since that some more definite intimation when the time of our visit would be convenient. He called here the other day, but we were none of us at home, and this morning we and my father heard from him, recalling our promise to go to Belvoir, and begging us to fix any time between this and the month of April. Now, the only time when my sister can go, poor child! is during Passion Week; and as I am very anxious that she should have the refreshment of a week in the country, and her being with us will be a great addition to my own enjoyment, I want to appoint that time for our visit to the Duke of Rutland. That, however, happens about the 20th of March, when I expected

you to be with us ; but if, by coming earlier, you can give me as long a visit as you had promised me, without inconveniencing yourself, I shall be glad, dear Harriet ; for though *we* can go to Belvoir at any time before or after March, I wish my sister not to lose a pleasant visit to a beautiful place. . . .

To tell you the truth, it would be a great pleasure to me that you should come so much sooner than I had reckoned upon having you ; and as Emily and I trotted round Portman Square together to-day, we both made out that, if you come into this arrangement, you will be here on Tuesday week, which appears to me in itself delightful. Let me know, dear, what you decide, as I shall not answer the Duke of Rutland until I have heard from you.

I promise myself much pleasure from seeing Belvoir. The place, with which I am familiar through engravings and descriptions, is a fine house in one of the finest situations in England ; and the idea of being out of London once more, in the country and on horseback, is superlatively agreeable to me.

And now, my dearest, to answer your letter, which I got this morning. For pity's sake, let Lady Westmoreland rest, for the present ; we will take her up again, if expedient, when we meet. . . . The Duke of Wellington called here the other day, and brought an exceedingly pretty bracelet and amiable note to my sister ; both which, as you may suppose, she values highly, as she ought to do.

About the cheering of the Queen on her way to Parliament the other day, I incline to think the silence was universal, for everybody with whom I was

observed it, except Charles Greville, who swore she was applauded; but then he is deaf, and therefore hears what no one else can. Moreover, the majority of spectators were by no means well-dressed people; the streets were thronged with pure mobocracy, to a degree unprecedented on any previous occasion of the sort, and, though there was no exhibition of ill feeling towards the Queen or any of the ministers, there was no demonstration of good will beyond the usual civility of lifting the hats as she passed. Indeed, Horace Wilson told me that, when he was crossing the park at the time of her driving through it, there was some—though not much—decided hissing.

Your lamentation over my want of curiosity reminds me that on this very occasion Charles Greville offered to take me all over the Coldbath Fields Prison, and show me the delights of the treadmill, etc., and expressed great astonishment that I did not enthusiastically accept this opportunity of seeing such a cheerful spectacle, and still more amazement at my general want of enlightened curiosity, which he appeared to consider quite unworthy of so intelligent a person.

I have not read Stephens' book on Central America, but only certain extracts from it in the last *Quarterly*, with which I was particularly charmed; but I admire your asking me why I did not send for his book from the circulating library instead of Paul de Kock. Do you suppose I sent for Paul de Kock? Don't you know I never send for *any* book, and never *read* any book, but such as I am desired, required, lent, or given to read by somebody? being, for the

most part, very indifferent what I read, and having the obliging faculty of forgetting immediately what I have read, which is an additional reason for my not caring much what my books are. Still, there is a point at which my indifference will give way to disgust. . . .

—— recommended Paul de Kock's books strongly to me, therefore I read one of them, but found it so very little to my taste, that I was obliged, against my usual rule of compliance with my friend's recommendations in these matters, to decline the rest of the author's works. I have begun your "Enfant du Peuple," and many are the heartaches I have had already, though I have read but little of it, over that poor Jean Baptiste's tender and touching love, which reminds one of Jacob's serving seven years for the sake of Rachel, and hardly counting them a day. . . .

Dearest Harriet, if in the matter of your visit to us, you cannot alter your plans, which have already been turned topsy-turvy once to suit ours, we will go at some other time to Belvoir, and my sister must e'en give it up, as in my professional days I had to forego Stoke, Chatsworth, and, hardest by far of all, Abbotsford.

God bless you, dearest Harriet. Give my kind love to M——. I rejoice to hear of her convalescence. Remember me affectionately to Dorothy, and believe me,

Ever yours,

FANNY.

Grimsthorpe, March 27th, 1842.

MY DEAREST HARRIET,

Thank God and O'Connell for your smooth passage. I really dreaded the effects of sea-sickness for you, combined with that racking cough. . . .

We left Belvoir yesterday, and came on here, having promised Lady Willoughby to visit them on our way back to London.

I do not know whether you ever saw Belvoir. It is a beautiful place; the situation is noble, and the views from the windows of the castle, and the terraces and gardens hanging on the steep hill crowned by it, are charming. The whole vale of Belvoir, and miles of meadow and woodland, lie stretched below it like a map unrolled to the distant horizon, presenting extensive and varied prospects in every direction, while from the glen which surrounds the castle hill like a deep moat filled with a forest, the spring winds swell up as from a sea of woodland, and the snatches of bird-carolling and cawing rook-discourse float up to one from nests in the topmost branches of tall trees, far below one's feet, as one stands on the battlemented terraces.

The interior of the house is handsome, and in good taste; and the whole mode of life stately and splendid, as well as extremely pleasant and comfortable. The people—I mean the Duke and his family—kind and courteous hosts, and the society very easy and free from stiffness or constraint of any sort; and I have enjoyed my visit very much. . . .

We had a large party at Belvoir. The gentlemen of the hunt were all at the castle; and besides the

ladies of the family (one unmarried and two married daughters), we had the Duchess of Richmond and her granddaughter, the Duke and Duchess of Bedford, Lord and Lady Winchelsea, Mademoiselle d'Este, and a whole tribe of others whose names I forget, but which are all duly down in the butler's book.

Every morning the duke's band marched round the castle, playing all sorts of sprightly music, to summon us to breakfast, and we had the same agreeable warning that dinner was ready. As soon as the dessert was placed on the table, singers came in, and performed four pieces of music; two by a very sweet single voice, and two by three or more voices. This, with intervals for conversation, filled up the allotted time before the ladies left the table. In the evening we had music, of course, and one evening we adjourned to the ball-room, where we danced all night, the duke leading down a country-dance, in which his housemaids and men-cooks were vigorously figuring at the same time.

Whenever my sister sang, the servants used all to assemble on a large staircase at one end of the ball-room, where, for the sake of the sound, the piano was placed, and appeared among her most enthusiastic hearers. . . . The whole family were extremely cordial and kind to us; and when we drove away, they all assembled at an upper window, waving hats and handkerchiefs as long as we could see them. I have no room to tell you anything of Grimsthorpe. God bless you. Good-bye.

Ever yours,
FANNY.

[My first introduction to "afternoon tea" took place during this visit to Belvoir, when I received on several occasions private and rather mysterious invitations to the Duchess of Bedford's room, and found her with a "small and select" circle of female guests of the castle, busily employed in brewing and drinking tea, with her grace's own private tea-kettle. I do not believe that now universally honoured and observed institution of "five-o'clock tea" dates further back in the annals of English civilization than this very private and, I think, rather shamefaced practice of it.

Our visit to Grimsthorpe has left but three distinct images on my memory: that of my bedroom, with its furniture of green velvet and regal bed-hangings of white satin and point lace; that of the collection of thrones in the dining-room, the Lords Willoughby de Eresby being hereditary Lord Grand Chamberlains of England, whose perquisite of office was the throne or chair of state used by each sovereign at his or her coronation; and my intercourse with Mademoiselle d'Este, who, like ourselves, came from Belvoir to Grimsthorpe, and with whom I here began an acquaintance that grew into intimacy, and interested me a good deal from her peculiar character and circumstances.]

Harley Street, London, March 31st, 1842.

MY DEAR T—,

. . . My father is in wonderful health, looks, and spirits, considering that in all these items this time last year he was very little better than dead. My sister is working very hard and very successfully,

and proposing to herself, after two more years of assiduous labour, to retire on a moderate income to Italy, where she would rather live than anywhere else. But, oh dear me! how well I remember the day when that was my own vision of the future, and only see what a very different thing it has turned out! I think it not at all improbable that she will visit the United States next year, and that we shall find that moment propitious for returning; that is to say, about a twelve-month from next month. . . . So much for private interests. As to the public ones: alas! Sir Robert Peel is losing both his health and his temper, they say; and no wonder at it! His modification of the corn laws and new tariff are abominations to his own party, and his income tax an abomination to the nation at large. I cannot conceive a more detestable position than his, except, perhaps indeed, that of the country itself just now. Poverty and discontent in great masses of the people; a pitiless Opposition, snapping up and worrying to pieces every measure proposed by the Ministry, merely for malignant *mischievousness*, as the nursemaids say, for I don't believe they—the Whigs—will be trusted again by the people for at least a century to come; a determined, troublesome, and increasing Radical party, whose private and personal views are fairly and dangerously masked by the public grievances of which they advocate the redress; a minister, hated personally by his own party, with hardly an individual of his own political persuasion in either House who follows him cordially, or, rather, who does not feel himself personally aggrieved by one or other of the measures of reform he has proposed,—

yet that minister the only man in England at this moment able to stand up at the head of public affairs, and the defeat of whose measures (distasteful as they are to his own party, and little satisfactory to the people in general) would produce instantaneously, I believe, such confusion, disorder, and dismay as England has not seen for many a year, not indeed since the last great Reform crisis;—all this is not pleasant, and makes me pity everybody connected with the present Government, and Sir Robert Peel more than anybody else. I wonder how long he'll be able to stand it.

What have you done with Lord Morpeth? And what are you doing with "Boz"? The first has a most tenderly attached mother and sisters, and really should not, on their account, be killed with kindness; and the latter has several small children, I believe, who, I suppose, will naturally desire that your national admiration should not annihilate their papa. . . . I wish we were to come back to America soon, but wishes are nonsensical things. . . . Give my dear love to Catherine and Kate [Miss Sedgwick and her niece], if they are in New York when this reaches you.

Good-bye, my dear T——. I would not have troubled you with this if I had known Mrs. Robert's address; but "Wall Street" will find you, though "Warren Street" knows her no longer.

We have been spending ten days at Belvoir Castle, with all sorts of dukes and duchesses. Don't you perceive it in the nobility of my style? It is well for a foreigner to see these things; they are pretty, pleasant, gay, grand, and, in some of their aspects,

good ; but I think that who would see them even as they still subsist now had better lose no time about it.

Harley Street, Tuesday, April 12th, 1842.

Did any one ever say there was not a "soul of good even in things evil"? From your mode of replying to my first letter, dearest Harriet—the one from Belvoir, in which I told you I had been strongly minded to write to you *first*—you do not seem to me quite to believe in the existence of such an intention. Nor was it a "weak thought," but a very decided purpose, which was frustrated by circumstances for one day, and the next prevented entirely by the arrival of your letter. However, no matter for all that now ; hear other things.

You ask after "Figaro" [Mozart's opera of "Le Nozze di Figaro," then being given at Covent Garden, my sister singing the part of Susanna]. It draws very fine houses, and Adelaide's acting in it is very much liked and praised, as it highly deserves to be, for it is capital, very funny, and *fine* in its fun, which makes good comedy—a charming thing, and a vastly more difficult one, in my opinion, than any tragic acting whatever. . . .

Your boots have been sent safe and sound, my dear, and are in the custody of a person who, I verily believe, thinks me incapable of taking care of anything in the world, and has the same amount of confidence in my understanding, that a friend of mine (a clergyman of the Church of England) expressed in his mother's honesty, "I wouldn't trust her with a bad sixpence round the corner." However, your boots, as

I said, are safe, and will reach your hands (or feet, I should rather say) in due course of time, I have no doubt.

I have had two letters from America lately, the last of them containing much news about the movements of the abolitionists, in which its writer takes great interest. Among other things, she mentions that an address had been published to the slaves, by Garrett Smith, exhorting them to run away, to use all means to do so, to do so at any risk, and also by all means and at any risk to learn to read. By all means, he advises them, in no case to use violence, or carry off property of their masters' (except indeed themselves, whom their masters account very valuable property). I should have told you that Garrett Smith himself was a large slave-holder, that he has given up all his property, renounced his home in the South (where, indeed, if he was to venture to set foot, he would be murdered in less than an hour). He lives at the North, in comparative poverty and privation, having given up his wealth for conscience' sake. I saw him once at Lucretia Mott's. He was a man of remarkable appearance, with an extremely sweet and noble countenance. He is one of the "confessors" in the martyr-age of America.

I am much concerned at your account of E——, for though sprains and twists and wrenches are not uncommon accidents, I have always much more dread of them than of a *bonâ* (bony) *fide* fracture. I always fear some injury may be lodged in the system by such apparently lesser casualties, that may not reveal itself till long after the real cause is forgotten. . . .

I must end this letter, for I have delayed it too shamefully long, and you must think me more abominable than ever, in spite of which I am still

Your most affectionate

FANNY.

Cranford House, April 17th, 1842.

I put a letter into the post for you, my dearest Harriet, this afternoon. This is all I was able to write to you yesterday—Wednesday; and now it is Thursday evening, and there is every prospect of my having leisure to finish my letter.

Emily has asked me several times to come and spend the evening with her mother, and I have promised her each time that the first evening . . .

Thus far last night, my dear—that is to say, Thursday evening. It is now Friday evening, and the long and the short of the story was that Emily dined out, Mrs. Fitz-Hugh *teaed* with the Miss Hamiltons, my party went to Drury Lane, and I passed the evening alone; and the reason why this letter was not finished during that lonely evening, my dear, was that I was sitting working worsted-work for Emily in the parlour downstairs, when my people all went away, and after they were gone, I was seized with a perfect nervous panic, a “Good” fever, and could not bring myself to stir from the chair where they had left me. As to going up into the drawing-room, it was out of the question; I fancied every step of the stairs would have morsels of flesh lying on it, and the banisters would be all smeared with blood and hairs. In short, I had a fit of the horrors, and sat the whole blessed

evening working heart'sease into Emily's canvas, in a perfect nightmare of horrible fancies. At one moment I had the greatest mind in the world to send for a cab, and go to Covent Garden Theatre, and sit in Adelaide's dressing-room; but I was ashamed to give way to my nerves in that cowardly fashion, and certainly passed a most miserable evening. . . . However, let me leave last night and its horrors, and make haste to answer your questions. . . .

Another pause, dear Harriet, and here I am at this picturesque old place, Cranford House, paying another visit to ——'s *venerable* friend, old Lady Berkeley. I have been taking a long walk this morning with Lady ——, whose London fine-ladyism gave way completely in these old walks of her early home, to which all the family appear extremely attached. Her unfeigned delight at the primroses, oxlips, wild cherry bloom, and varying greens of the spring season made me think that her lament was not applicable to herself, just then, at any rate. "What a pity," cried she, "it is that one cannot be regenerated as the earth is every spring!" *She* seemed to me to be undergoing a very pretty process of regeneration even while she spoke. It is touching to observe natural character and the lingering traces of early impressions surviving under the overlaying of the artificial soil and growth of after years of society and conventional worldly habits. She pointed out to me a picturesque, pretty object in the grounds, over which she moralized with a good deal of enthusiasm and feeling—an old, old fir tree, one of the cedar tribe, a tree certainly many more than a hundred years old, whose drooping lower

branches absolutely lie upon the lawn for yards all round it. One of these boughs has struck into the ground, and grown up into a beautiful young tree, already twelve or fourteen feet high, and the contrast between the vivid colouring and erect foliage of this young thing, and the rusty, dusky green, drooping branches of the enormous tree, which seems to hang over and all round it, with parental tenderness, is quite exquisite. One of them, however, must, nevertheless, destroy or be destroyed by the other; a very pretty vegetable version of the ancient classical, family fate, superstitions. . . .

Pray, if you know how flowers propagate, write me word. In gathering primroses this morning, Lady — and I exercised our ignorance in all sorts of conjectures upon the subject, neither of us being botanists, though she knew, which I did not, the male from the female flowers.

I get a good deal of sleep since you have gone away, as I certainly do not sit up talking half the night with anybody else. But as for enough, is there such a thing as enough sleep? and was anybody ever known to have had it? and who was he or she?

I have had two long letters from Elizabeth Sedgwick, containing much matter about the abolitionists, in whose movements, you know, she is deeply interested; also more urgent entreaties that I will "use my influence" to secure our return home in the autumn! . . .

My father appears to be quite well, and in a state of great pleasurable excitement and activity of mind, having (alas! I regret to say) accepted once more the

management of Covent Garden, which is too long a story to begin just at the end of my paper; but he is in the theatre from morning till night, as happy as the gods, and apparently, just now, as free from all mortal infirmity. It is amazing, to be sure, what the revival of the one interest of his life has done for his health.

I went to the Portland Street Chapel last Sunday, and heard a sermon upon my peculiar virtue, *humility*, not from the same clergyman we heard together; and S——, who is too funny, sang the Psalms so loud that I had to remonstrate with her.

Ever yours,

F. A. B.

[A horrible murder had just been committed by a miserable man of the name of Good, who endeavoured to conceal his crime by cutting to pieces and scattering in different directions the mangled remains of his victim—a woman. The details of these horrors filled the public papers, and were the incessant subject of discussion in society, and were calculated to produce an impression of terror difficult to shake off, even by so little nervous a person as myself.

The Countess of Berkeley, to whom I have alluded in this letter, was a woman whose story was a singular romance, which now may be said to belong to “ancient history.” She was the daughter of a butcher of Gloucester, and an extremely beautiful person. Mr. Henry Berkeley, the fifth son of Lady Berkeley, for many years Member of Parliament for Bristol, and as many years the persistent advocate of the system

of voting by ballot, travelled and resided for some time in America, and formed a close intimacy with —, who, when we came to England, accepted Mr. Berkeley's invitation to visit his mother at Cranford, and took me with him, to make the acquaintance of this remarkable old lady. She was near eighty years old, tall and stately, with no apparent infirmities, and great remains of beauty. There was great originality in all she said, and her manner was strikingly energetic for so old a woman. I remember, one day after dinner, she had her glass filled with claret till the liquid appeared to form a rim above the vessel that contained it, and, raising it steadily to her lips, looked round the table, where sat all her children but Lord Fitzhardinge, and saying, "God bless you all," she drank off the contents without spilling a drop, and, replacing the glass on the table, said, "Not one of my sons could do that."

One morning, when I was rather indisposed, and unable to join any of the parties into which the guests had divided themselves on their various quests after amusement, I was left alone with Lady Berkeley, and she undertook to give me a sketch of her whole history; and very strange it was. She gave me, of course, her own version of the marriage story, and I could not but wonder whether she might have persuaded herself into believing it true, when she wound up her curious and interesting account of her life by saying, "And now, I am ready to be carried to my place in the vault, and my place in the vault is ready for me" (she pointed to the church which adjoined the old mansion); "and I have the key of it here," and she gave a hearty slap

upon her pocket. She told me of her presentation at Court, and the uproar it occasioned among the great ladies there, whose repugnance to admit her of their number she described with much humour, but attributed solely to the fact of her plebeian descent, of which she spoke unhesitatingly.

The impression I gathered from her narrative, rather unconsciously on her part, I suspect, was that the Queen, whose strictness upon the subject of reputation was well known, objected to receiving her (Lady Berkeley called her, rather disrespectfully, "Old Charlotte" all the time, but spoke of George III. as "the King"), but was overruled by the King, who had a personal friendship for Lord Berkeley.

The strangest thing in her whole account of herself, however, was the details she gave me of her singular power over her husband. She said that in a very few years after their marriage (by courtesy) she perceived that her husband's affairs were in the most deplorable state of derangement: that he gambled, that he was over head and ears in debt, that he never had a farthing of ready money, that his tenantry were worse off than any other in the county, that his agents and bailiffs and stewards were rogues who ground them and cheated him, that his farmers were careless and incompetent, and that the whole of his noble estate appeared to be going irretrievably to ruin; when the earl, complaining one day bitterly of this state of things, for which he knew no remedy, she told him that she would find the remedy, and undertake to recover what was lost and redeem what remained, if he would give her absolute discretionary power to deal

with his property as she pleased, and not interfere with her management of it for a whole year. He agreed to this, but, not satisfied with his promise, she made him bind himself by oath and, moreover, execute documents, giving her legal power enabling her to act independently of him in all matters relating to his estate. The earl not unnaturally demurred, but at length yielded, only stipulating that she should always be prepared to furnish him with money whenever he wanted it. She bound herself to do this, and received regular powers from him for the uninterrupted management of his property and administration of his affairs for a whole year. She immediately set about her various plans of reform, and carried them on vigorously and successfully, without the slightest interference on the part of her dissipated and careless husband, who had entirely forgotten the whole compact between them. Some months after the agreement had gone into effect, she perceived that he was harassed and disturbed about something, and questioning him, found he had incurred a heavy gambling debt, which he knew not how to meet. His surprise was extreme when, recalling the terms of their mutual agreement, she put him in possession of the sum he required. "He called me an angel," she said. "You see, my dear, one is always an angel, when one holds the strings of the purse, and that there is money in it."

She persevered in her twelvemonth's stewardship, and at the end of that time had redeemed her word, and relieved her husband's estate from its most pressing embarrassments. The value of the land had increased, the condition of the tenantry had improved,

intelligent and active farmers had had the farms rented to them, instead of the previous sleepy set of incumbents; and finally, a competent and honest agent, devoted to carry out her views, was placed over the whole. The property never fell from this highly prosperous condition, for Lord Berkeley never withdrew it from his wife's supervision; and she continued to administer his affairs till his death, and maintained an extraordinary influence over all the members of her family, at the time of my acquaintance with her. They were all rather singular persons, and had a vein of originality which made them unlike the people one met in common society. I suppose their mother's unusual character may have had to do with this.

Lord Fitzhardinge was never at Cranford when I was there, though I have, at various times, met all the other brothers.

Frederick Berkeley went into the navy, and rose to the important position of an admiral; Craven Berkeley, Grantley Berkeley, and Henry Berkeley were all in Parliament. The latter was for many years Member for the important constituency of Bristol, and, probably in consequence of opinions acquired during his residence in the United States, was a consistent advocate for the introduction of vote by ballot in our elections. This gentleman was an unusually accomplished person: he had made preparatory studies for two professions, the Church and the Bar; but though he embraced neither career (possibly on account of an accident he met with while hunting, which crippled him for life), the reading he had gone through for both had necessarily endowed him with a more than

common degree of mental cultivation. He was an excellent musician, played on the piano and organ with considerable taste and feeling, and had a much more thorough acquaintance with the science of music than is usual in an amateur.

Morton Berkeley sought no career; he lived with his mother and sister, Lady Mary, at Cranford, his principal pleasure and occupation being the preservation of the game on the estate—an object of not very easy accomplishment, owing to the proximity of Cranford to London, the distance being only twelve miles by railroad, and the facilities thus offered of escape and impunity to poachers necessarily considerable. The tract immediately round Cranford was formerly part of the famous, or rather infamous, Hounslow Heath; and I have heard Mr. Henry Berkeley say that in his youth he remembered perfectly, when he went to London with his father, by day or night, loaded pistols were an invariable part of the carriage furniture.

My first acquaintance with Mr. Morton Berkeley's devotion to the duties of a gamekeeper was made in a very singular manner, and accompanied by a revelation of an unexpected piece of sentiment.

— and myself were visiting at Cranford on one occasion, when the only strangers there beside ourselves were Lady C—, Lord and Lady S—, and Lord F— and his sister, a lady of some pretensions to beauty, but still more to a certain fashionable elegance of appearance, much enhanced by her very Parisian elaborateness of toilette.

One night, when the usual hour for retiring had come, the ladies, who always preceded the gentlemen

by some hours to their sleeping apartments, had left the large room on the ground floor, where we had been spending the evening. As we ascended the stairs, my attention was attracted by some articles of dress which lay on one of the window-seats: a heavy, broad-brimmed hat, a large rough pea-jacket, and a black leather belt and cutlass—a sort of coastguard costume which, lying in that place, excited my curiosity. I stopped to examine them, and Lady Mary exclaiming, “Oh, those are Morton’s night clothes; he puts them on when everybody is gone to bed, to go and patrol with the gamekeepers round the place. *Do* put them on for fun;” she seized them up, and began accoutring me in them.

When I was duly enveloped in these very peculiar trappings, we all burst into fits of laughter, and it was instantly proposed that we should all return to the drawing-room, I marching at their head in my gamekeeper’s costume. Without further consideration, I ran downstairs again, followed by the ladies, and so re-entered the room, where the gentlemen were still assembled in common council, and where our almost immediate return in this fashion was hailed by a universal shout of surprise and laughter. After standing for a minute, with the huge rough overcoat over my rose-coloured satin and *moiré* skirts, which made a most ludicrous termination to the pugnacious habit of my upper woman, I plunged my hand into one of the pockets, and drew forth a pair of hand-cuffs (a prudent provision in case of an encounter with poachers). Encouraged by the peals of merriment with which this discovery was greeted, I thrust my

other hand into the other pocket, when Mr. Morton Berkeley, without uttering a word, rushed at me, and, seizing me by the wrist, prevented my accomplishing my purpose. The suddenness of this movement frightened me at first a good deal. Presently, however, my emotion changed, and I felt nothing but amazement at being thus unceremoniously seized hold of, and rage at finding that I could not extricate myself from the grasp that held me. Like a coward and a woman, I appealed to all the other gentlemen, but they were laughing so excessively that they were quite unable to help me, and probably anticipated no great mischief from Mr. Berkeley's proceeding. I was almost crying with mortification, and actually drew the cutlass and threatened to cut the fingers that encircled my wrist like one of the iron handcuffs, but, finding my captor inexorable, I was obliged, with extreme sulky confusion, to beg to be let go, and promise to take the coat off without any further attempts to search the pockets. I divested myself of my borrowed apparel a great deal faster than I had put it on, and its owner walked off with the pea-jacket, the right pocket of which remained unexplored. We ladies withdrew again, rather crestfallen at the termination of our joke, I rubbing my wrist like Mary Stuart after her encounter with Lord Ruthven, and wondering extremely what could be the mysterious contents of that pocket.

The next day, Lady Mary told me that her brother had long cherished a romantic sort of idolatry for Miss F——, and that, as a pendant to the handcuffs in one pocket of his dreadnought, the other contained her

miniature, which he dreaded the night before that my indiscretion would produce, to the derision of the men, the distress and confusion of the young lady herself, and the possible displeasure of her brother. Mr. Morton Berkeley's manners to me after that were again, as they always had been, respectful and rather reserved; the subject of our "fight" was never again alluded to, and he remained to me a gentle, shy, courteous, (and romantic) gentleman.

He was habitually silent, but when he did speak, he was very apt to say something apposite, and generally containing the pith of the matter under discussion. I remember once, when I was reproaching his brother Henry and his sister with what I thought the unbecoming manner in which they criticized the deportment and delivery of a clergyman whose sermon they had just listened to (and who certainly was rather an unfortunate specimen of outward divinity), Mr. Morton Berkeley suddenly turned to me, and said "Why, Mrs. Butler, he is only the rusty bars the light shines through"—a quotation, in fact, but a very apposite one, and I am not sure but that it was an unconscious one, and an original illustration on his part.

Mr. Thomas Duncombe, the notorious Radical Member for Finsbury, very generally and very disrespectfully designated in the London society of his day as "Tommy Duncombe," and Mr. Maxse (Lady Caroline Berkeley's husband), were also among the persons with whom I became acquainted at Cranford.

Of a curious feat of charioteership, performed by the latter gentleman, I was told once by the Duke of Beaufort, who said he had derived from it the nick-

name of "Go-along Maxse." Driving late one night with a friend, on a turnpike road, after the gates were closed, he said to his companion, "Now, if the turnpike we are just coming to is shut, I'll take the horse and gig over the gate." The gig was light, the horse powerful and swift. As they bowled along and came in sight of the gate, they perceived that it was closed; when Mr. Maxse's companion calling out to him, "Go along, Maxse," that gentleman fulfilled his threat or promise, whichever it might be, and put his horse full at the gate, which the gallant creature cleared, bringing the carriage and its live freight safe to the ground on the other side; a feat which I very unintentionally imitated, in a humble degree, many years after, with an impunity my carelessness certainly did not deserve.

Driving in a state of considerable mental preoccupation out of my own gate one day at Lennox, in a very light one-horse "waggon" (as such vehicles are there called), instead of turning my horse's head either up or down the road, I let him go straight across it, to the edge of a tolerably wide dry ditch, when, suddenly checking him, the horse, who was a saddle-horse and a good leaper, drew himself together, and took the ditch, with me in the carriage behind him, and brought up against a fence, where there was just room for him to turn round, which he immediately did, as if aware of his mistake, and proceeded to leap back again, quite successfully without any assistance of mine, I being too much amazed at the whole performance to do anything but sit still and admire my horse's dexterity.

I have adverted to the still existing industry of "gentlemen of the road," in speaking of Cranford in

the days of the Earl of Berkeley, who used to take pistols in the carriage when he went to London. On one occasion, when he was riding, unattended, but fortunately not unarmed, over some part of Hounslow Heath, a highwayman rode up to him, and, saluting him by name, said, "I know, my lord, you have sworn never to give in to one of us; but now I mean to try if you're as good as your word." "So I have, you rascal, but there are two of you here," replied the earl. The robber, thrown off his guard, looked round for the companion thus indicated, and Lord Berkeley instantly shot him through the head; owing it to his ready presence of mind that he escaped a similar fate at the hands of his assailant.

My mother, I think, had the advantage of a slight personal acquaintance with one of the very last of these Tyburn heroes. She lived at one time, before her marriage, with her mother and sisters and only brother, at a small country house beyond Finchley; to which suburban, or indeed then almost entirely rural, retreat my father and other young men of her acquaintance used occasionally to resort for an afternoon's sport, in the present highly distinguished diversion of pigeon-shooting. On one of these occasions some one of her habitual guests brought with him a friend, who was presented to my mother, and joined in the exercise of skill. He was like a gentleman in his appearance and manners, with no special peculiarity but remarkably white and handsome hands and extraordinary dexterity, or luck, in pigeon-shooting. Captain Clayton was this individual's name, and his visit, never repeated to my mother's house, was remem-

bered as rather an agreeable event. Soon after this, several outrages were committed on the high-road which passed through Finchley; and Moody, the celebrated comic actor, who lived in that direction, was stopped one evening as he was driving himself into town, by a mounted gentleman, who, addressing him politely by name, demanded his watch and purse, which Moody surrendered, under the influence of "the better part of valour." Having done so, however, he was obliged to request his "very genteel" thief to give him enough money to pay his turnpike on his way into town, where he was going to act, whereupon the "gentleman of the road" returned him half-a-crown, and bade him a polite "Good evening." Some time after this, news was brought into Covent Garden, at rehearsal one morning, that a man arrested for highway robbery was at the Bow Street Police Office, immediately opposite the theatre. Several of the *corps dramatique* ran across the street to that famous vestibule of the Temple of Themis; among others, Mr. Moody and Vincent de Camp. The latter immediately recognized my mother's white-handed, gentleman-like pigeon-shooter; and Moody his obliging MacHeath of the Finchley Common highway. "Halloa! my fine fellow," said the actor to the thief, "is that you? Well, perhaps as you *are* here, you won't object to return me my watch, for which I have a particular value, and which won't be of any great use to you now, I suppose." "Lord love ye, Mr. Moody," replied *Captain Clayton*, with a pleasant smile, "I thought you were come to pay me the half-crown I lent you."]

Harley Street, Friday, April 22nd, 1842.

MY DEAR T——,

I am not in the least indifferent to the advent of £100 sterling. . . .

I am amused with your description of Dickens, because it tallies so completely with the first impression he made upon me the only time I ever met him before he went to America. . . . I admire and love the man exceedingly, for he has a deep warm heart, a noble sympathy with and respect for human nature, and great intellectual gifts wherewith to make these fine moral ones fruitful for the delight and consolation and improvement of his fellow-beings.

Lord Morpeth is indeed, as we say, another guess-man, but quite one of the most amiable in this world or *that*. He is universally beloved and respected, so tenderly cherished by his own kindred that his mother and sisters seem absolutely miserable with various anxieties about him, and the weariness of his prolonged absence. He is a most worthy gentleman, and "goes nigh to be thought so" by all classes here, I can tell you. . . .

You ask me if I have any warmer friends in England than your people, who are certainly my warmest friends in America. I have some friends in my own country who have known and loved me longer than your family; but I do not think, with one or two exceptions, that they love me better, nor do I reckon upon the faith and affection of my American friends less than upon that of my English ones. But the number of people whom I entirely love and trust is very small anywhere, and yet large enough to make me thank

God every day for the share He has given me of worthy friendships—treasures sufficient for me to account myself very rich in their possession; living springs of goodness and affection, in which my spirit finds never-failing refreshment. But I have in my own country a vast number of very kind and cordial acquaintances, and, to tell you the truth, am better understood (naturally) and better liked in society, I think, here than on your side of the water. I fancy I am more popular, upon the whole, among my own people than among yours; which is not to be wondered at, as difference is almost always an element of dislike, and, of course, I am more different from American than English people. Indeed, I have come to consider the difference of nationality a broader, stronger, and deeper difference than that produced by any mere dissimilarity of individual character. It is tantamount to looking at everything from another point of view; to having, from birth and through education, other standards; to having, in short, another intellectual and moral horizon. No personal unlikeness between two individuals of the same nation, however strong it may be in certain points, is equal to the entire unlikeness, fundamental, superficial, and thorough, of two people of different nations.

I am anxious to close this letter before I go out, and shall only add, in replying to your next question of whether I ever feel any desire to return to the stage, *Never*. . . . My very nature seems to me dramatic. I cannot speak without gesticulating and making faces, any more than an Italian can; I am fond, moreover, of the excitement of *acting*, personating interest-

ing characters in interesting situations, giving vivid expression to vivid emotion, realizing in my own person noble and beautiful imaginary beings, and *uttering the poetry of Shakespeare*. But the stage is not only this, but much more that is not this; and that much more is not only by no means equally agreeable, but positively odious to me, and always was.

Good-bye. God bless you and yours.

Believe me always yours most truly,

FANNY BUTLER.

Harley Street, May 1st, 1842.

MY DEAREST HARRIET,

I have just despatched a letter to Emily, from whom I have had two already since she reached Bannisters. She writes chiefly of her mother, whose efforts to bear her trial are very painful to poor Emily, whose fewer years and excellent mental habits render such exertions easier to her. [To no one can self-control under such sorrow ever be easy.

You ask about my going to the Drawing-room, which happened thus: The Duke of Rutland dined some little time ago at the Palace, and speaking of the late party at Belvoir, mentioned me, when the Queen asked why I didn't have myself presented? The duke called the next day at our house, but we did not see him, and he being obliged to go out of town, left a message for me with Lady Londonderry, to the effect that her Majesty's interest about me (curiosity would have been the more exact word, I suspect) rendered it imperative that I should go to the Drawing-room; and, indeed, Lady Londonderry's

authoritative "Of course you'll go," given in her most *gracious* manner, left me no doubt whatever as to my duty in that respect, especially as the message duly delivered by her was followed up by a letter from the duke, from Newmarket, who, from the midst of his bets, handicaps, sweepstakes, and cups, wrote me over again all that he had bid the marchioness tell me. Wherefore, having no objection whatever to go to Court (except, indeed, the expense of my dress, the idea of which caused me no slight trepidation, as I had already exceeded my year's allowance), I referred the matter to my supreme authority, and it being settled that I was to go, I ordered my tail, and my top, train, and feathers, and went. And this is the whole story, with this postscript, that, not owning a single diamond, I hired a handsome set for the occasion from Abud and Collingwood, every single stone of which darted a sharp point of nervous anxiety into my brain and bosom the whole time I wore them.

As you know that I would not go to the end of the street to see a drawing-room full of full moons, you will easily believe that there was nothing particularly delightful to me in the occasion. But after all, it was very little more of an exertion than I make five nights of the week, in going to one place or another; and under the circumstances it was certainly fitting and proper that I should go.

I suffered agonies of nervousness, and, I rather think, did all sorts of awkward things; but so, I dare say, do other people in the same predicament, and I did not trouble my head much about my various *mis*-performances. One thing, however, I can tell you,

if her Majesty has seen me, I have not seen her; and should be quite excusable in cutting her wherever I met her. "A cat may look at a king," it is said; but how about looking at *the* Queen? In great uncertainty of mind on this point, I did not look at my sovereign lady. I kissed a soft white hand, which I believe was hers; I saw a pair of very handsome legs, in very fine silk stockings, which I am convinced were not hers, but am inclined to attribute to Prince Albert; and this is all I perceived of the whole royal family of England, for I made a sweeping curtsy to the "good remainders of the Court," and came away with no impression but that of a crowded mass of full-dressed confusion, and neither know how I got in or out of it. . . .

You ask about Liszt. He does not take the management of the German Opera, as was expected; indeed, I wonder he ever accepted such an employment. I should think him most unfit to manage such an undertaking, with his excitable temper and temperament. I do not know whether he will come to London at all this season. Adelaide has been bitterly disappointed about it, and said that she had reckoned upon him in great measure for the happiness of her whole summer. . . .

You ask next in your category of questions after Adelaide's dog, and whether it is led in a string successfully yet; and thereby hangs a tale. T'other morning she was awakened by a vehement knocking at her door, and S—— exclaiming, in a loud and solemn voice, "Adelaide, thy maid and thy dog are in a fit together!" which announcement she continued to repeat,

with more and more emphasis, till my sister, quite frightened, jumped out of bed, and came upon the stairs, where she beheld the two women and children just come in from their walk; Anne, looking over the banisters with her usual peculiar air of immovable dignity, slowly ejaculating, "What a fool the girl is!" Caroline followed in her wake, wringing her hands, and alternately shrieking and howling, like all the Despairs in the universe. It was long before anything could be distinguished of articulate speech, among the *fräulein's* howls and shrieks; but at length it appeared that she had taken "die Tine" out in the Regent's Park with Anne and the children, who now go out directly after their breakfast. Tiny, it seems, enjoyed the trip amazingly, and became so excited and so very much transported with what we call animal spirits in human beings, that it began to run, as the *fräulein* thought, away. Whereupon the *fräulein* began to run after it; whereupon Tiny, when it heard this Dutch nymph heavy in hot pursuit, ran till it knocked its head against a keeper's lodge, and here, because it shook and trembled and stared, probably at its own unwonted performance, a sympathizing crowd collected, who instantly proclaimed it at first in a *convulsion* fit, and then decidedly mad. Water was offered it, which it only stared at and shook its head, evidently dreading the cleansing element. A policeman coming by immediately proposed to kill it. This, however, the *fräulein* objected to; and catching the bewildered quadruped in her arms, she set off home, escorted by a running mob of sympathetic curiosity. But about half-way the struggle between herself and "die Tine"

became so terrific that it ended by the luckless little brute escaping from her, and precipitating itself down an area, where it remained, invoking heaven with howls, while Caroline ran howling down the street. The manservant was then sent (twice with a wrong direction) to fetch the poor little creature up, and bring it home. At length Caroline accompanied the footman to the scene of the dog-astrophe (you wouldn't call it *cat-astrophe*, would you?), and "die Tine" was safely lodged in the back-yard here, where, being left alone and not bothered with human solicitude, it presently recovered as many small wits as it ever had, drank voluntarily plenty of water, and gave satisfactory signs of being quite as rational as any lady's little dog need be; but the *fräulein* protests she will never take "die Tine" out walking again.

Good-bye, dear. God bless you. I am pretty well, if that comports with low spirits and terrible nervous irritability.

Yours ever,

FANNY.

My father desires his love to you.

Harley Street, Friday, May 6th, 1842.

I did ask Emily my botanical questions, but she could tell me no more than you have done, and knew nothing special about the primroses.

You ask me a great deal in your letter about my father again taking the management of Covent Garden, and on what terms he has done so; all which I have told you in the letter I have just despatched to you. . . .

Adelaide has repeatedly said that, as soon as she has realized three hundred a year, she will give up the whole business ; and I comfort myself with that purpose of hers ; for if at the conclusion of next season she will go to America for a year, she will more than realize the result she proposes to herself. . . . I cannot, however, help fearing that obstacles may arise to prevent her eventually fulfilling her purpose when the time comes for her retiring, according to her present expectation and wish. . . .

I have not been out a great deal lately. We seem a little less inclined to fly at all quarry than last season ; and as I never decide whether we shall accept the invitations that come or not, I am very well pleased that some of them are declined. I believe I told you that Lady Londonderry had asked us to a magnificent ball. This I was rather sorry to refuse, as a ball is quite as great a treat to me as to any "young miss" just coming out. Indeed, I think my capacity of enjoyment and excitement is greater than that of most "young misses" I see, who not only talk of being *bored*, but actually contrive, poor creatures ! to look so in the middle of their first season.

I spent two hours with poor Lady Dacre yesterday evening. . . . After sitting with her, we went to a large party at Sydney Smith's, where I was very much amused and pleased, and saw numbers of people that I know and like—rather.

You ask about my walks. . . . They are now chiefly confined to my peregrinations in the Square measuring the enclosed gravel walks of which I have already, since your departure, finished the "*Mémoires*

de l'Enfant du Peuple," and brought myself, *mirabile dictu!* to within twenty pages of the end of Mrs. Jameson's book upon Prussian school statistics. . . .

I do not think Mr. W—— any authority upon any subject. I consider him a perfect specimen of a charlatan, and his opinions with regard to slavery and the abolitionists are particularly little worthy of credit in my mind, because he *used* America precisely as an actor would, to make money wherever he could by his lectures, which he puffed himself, till he was absolutely laughed at all over the country, and which were, by the accounts of those who heard them, perfectly shallow and often quite erroneous as far as regarded the information they pretended to impart. The Southern States were a lucrative field for his lecturing speculation; the Northern abolitionists were far from being sufficiently numerous or influential for it to be worth his while to conciliate them; and for these reasons I attach little value to his statement upon that or indeed any other subject.

You ask me what was my impression altogether of the Drawing-room? I have told you about my own performances there, of which, however, I dare say I exaggerated the awkwardness to myself. The whole thing wearied me, just as any other large, overcrowded assembly where I could not sit down, would; and that is the chief impression it has left upon me. I believe I was flattered by the Queen's expressing any curiosity about me, but I went simply because I was told it was right that I should do so. I am always horribly shy, or nervous, or whatever that foolish sensation ought to be called, at even having to walk across a

room full of people; and therefore the fuss and to-do and ceremonial of the presentation (particularly not having been very well drilled beforehand by Lady Francis, who presented me) were disagreeable to me; but I have retained no impression of the whole thing other than of a very large and fatiguing rout. We are advised to go again on the birthday, but that I am sure we shall not do; and now that the Queen—God bless her!—has perceived that I do not go upon all-fours, but am indeed, as Bottom says, “a woman like any other woman,” I have no doubt her gracious Majesty is abundantly satisfied with what she saw of me.

Good-bye, dearest Harriet.

Ever yours,

F. A. B.

[The enthusiastic abolitionist, Mrs. Lydia Child, had written to me, requesting me to give her for publication some portions of the journal I had kept during my residence in Georgia; and I had corresponded with my friend, Mrs. Charles Sedgwick, upon the subject, deciding to refuse her request. My Georgia journal never saw the light till the War of Secession was raging in America, and almost all the members of the society in which I was then living in England were strongly sympathizing with the Southern cause, when I thought it right to state what, according to my own observation and experience, that cause involved.]

[*Harley Street, May 6th, 1842.*]

MY DEAREST HARRIET,

The carriage is waiting to take — to the *Levée*, and I am waiting till it comes back to go upon my thousand and one daily errands. Adelaide, it being her last day at home, appears anxious to enjoy as much as she can of my society, and has therefore gone fast asleep in the armchair by the table at which I am writing, and has expressed her intention of coming out and paying visits with me this morning. She starts at eight o'clock this evening, and will reach Birmingham, I believe, about one. This arrangement, which I should think detestable, pleases her very much. . . .

Mr. Everett, our friend, presents —, and I thought Anne would have fallen down in a fit when she heard that the ceremony consisted in going down on one knee and kissing the Queen's hand. She did not mind my doing it the least in the world, but her indignation has been unbounded at the idea of a free-born American citizen submitting to such a degradation. Poor thing! "Lucifer, son of the morning," was meek and humble to her.

We dined to-day with the Francis-Egertons, to meet the young Guardsmen who are to form our *corps dramatique* for "The Hunchback," which, you know, we are going to act in private. To-morrow evening we go to Sydney Smith's, and, on Monday, down to Oatlands for a few days. I am always delighted in that place, and the lovely wild country round it. Lady Francis will mount me, and I expect my old enjoyment in riding about those beautiful and well-remembered haunts with her. . . .

There has been a grand row at the Italian Opera-House, among the managers, singers, and singeresses. Mario (Mons. Di Candia ; I suppose you know who I mean) has, it seems, for some reason or other, been *discharged*. Madame Grisi, who sympathizes with him, refuses to uplift her voice, that being the case ; the new singeress, Frezzolini, does not please at all ; and the new singer, Rouconi, isn't allowed by his wife to sing with any woman but herself, and she is a perfect *dose* to the poor audience. Lumley, the solicitor, manager of these he and she divinities, declares that if they don't behave better he'll shut the theatre at the end of the week. In the mean time, underhand proposals have been made to Adelaide to stop the gap, and sing for a few nights for them—a sort of proposal which does not suit her, which she has scornfully rejected, and departed with her tail over her shoulder, leaving the behind scenes of Her Majesty's Theatre with their tails between their legs. . . .

My dearest Harriet, you ask me if I do not think the spirit of martyrdom is often alloyed with self-esteem and wilfulness. God alone knows the measure in which human infirmity and human virtue unite in inducing the sacrifice of life and all that life loves for a point of opinion. I confess, for my own part, self-esteeming and wilful as I am, that to suffer bodily torture for the sake of an abstract question of what one believes to be right, is an effort of courage so much above any that I am capable of, that I do not feel as if I had a right to undervalue it by the smallest doubt cast upon the merit of those who have shown themselves capable of it. It may be that, without such

admixture of imperfection as human nature's highest virtues are still tinged with, the confessors of every good and noble cause would have left unfulfilled their heroic task of witnessing to the truth by their death; but if indeed base alloy did mingle with their great and conscientious sacrifice, let us hope that the pangs of physical torture, the anguish of injustice and ignominy, and the rending asunder of all the ties of earthly affection, may have been some expiation for the imperfection of their most perfect deed. . . .

Will you, my dear, be so good as to remember what a hang-nail is like? or a grain of dust in your eye? or a blister on your heel? or a corn on your toe? and then reflect what the word "torture" implies, when it meant all that the most devilish cruelty could invent. Savonarola! good gracious me! I would have *canted* and *recanted*, and called black white, and white black, and confessed, and denied! Please don't think of it! God be praised, those days are over! Not but what I edified Mr. Combe greatly once, when I was a girl, by declaring that if, by behaving well under torture, I could have vexed my tormentors very much, and if I might have had plenty of people to see how well I behaved, I thought I could have managed it; to which he replied, "Oh, weel now, Fanny, ye've just got the very spirit of a martyr in you." See if that theory of the matter answers your notion. . . .

You ask me how I managed about diamonds to go to Court in? I hired a set, which I also wore at the *fête* at Apsley House; they were only a necklace and earrings, which I wore as a *bandesu*, stitched on scarlet velvet, and as drops in the middle of scarlet velvet

bows in my hair, and my dress, being white satin and point lace, trimmed with white Roman pearls, it all looked nice enough. The value of the jewels was only £700, but I am sure they gave me £7000 worth of misery, and if her Majesty had but known the anguish I endured in showing my respect for her by false appearances, the very least ; she could have done would have been to have bought the jewels and given them to me. Madame Dévy made my Court dress, which was of such material as, you see, I can use when I play "The Hunchback" at Lady Francis's. I am ruining myself, in spite of my best endeavours to be economical ; but if it is any comfort to you to know it, my conscience torments me horribly for it. . . .

God bless you. Good-bye, dear.

Ever yours affectionately,

F. A. B.

Harley Street, Saturday, May 7th, 1842.

. . . What an immense long talk I am having with you this morning, my dear Hal ! I do not believe you are wearied, however ; but you will surely wonder why I did not put all these letters under one cover with the three sovereign heads on the one packet ; and I am sure I don't know why I have not. But it doesn't matter much my appearing a little more or a little less absurd to you.

You ask who I shall associate with while — and Adelaide are away. . . . I presume with my own writing-table and the carriage cushions, just as I do now, just as I did before, and just as I am likely to do hereafter. . . .

It was not the presence of the Queen that affected my nerves at the Drawing-room, but *my own* presence ; *i.e.* as the French say, I was “*très embarrassée de ma personne.*” The uncertainty of what I was to do (for Lady Francis had been exceedingly succinct in her instructions), and the certainty of a crowd of people staring all round me,—this, I think, and not the overpowering sense of a royal human being before me, was what made me nervous. Were I to go again to a Drawing-room, now that I know my lesson, I do not think I should suffer at all from any embarrassment. We are not asked to the fancy ball at the Palace, I am told, because of our omission in not attending at the Birthday Drawing-room, which, it seems, is a usual thing after a first presentation. I should like to have seen it; it will be a fine sight. In the mean time, as many of our acquaintances are going, we come in for a full share of the insanity which has taken possession of men’s and women’s minds about velvets, satins, brocades, etc. You enter no room that is not literally *strewed* with queer-looking prints of costumes; and before you can say, “How d’ye do?” you are asked which looks best together—blue and green, or pink and yellow? for, indeed, their selections are often as outrageous as these would be. I never conceived people could be so stupid at combining ideas, even upon this least abstruse of subjects; and you would think, to hear these fine ladies talk the inanity they do about their own clothes, now they are compelled to think about them for themselves, that they have no natural perceptions of even colour, form, or proportion. The fact is, that even their *dressing*-brains are turned over

to their French milliners and lady's-maids. I understand Lady A—— says she will make her dress alone (exclusive of jewels) cost £1000.

Some people say this sort of mad extravagance does good ; I cannot think it. It surely matters comparatively little that the insane luxury of the self-indulgent feeds the bodies of so many hundred people if at the same time the mischievous example of their folly and extravagance is demoralizing their hearts and minds and injuring a great many more.

Touching Lady A——, she gave the address of one of her milliners to Lady W——, who, complaining to her of the exorbitant prices of this superlative *faiseuse*, and plaintively stating that she had charged her fifty guineas for a simple morning dress, Lady A—— replied, "Ah, very likely, I dare say ; I don't know anything about *cheap clothes*."

I do not know where Adelaide is likely to lodge in Dublin, nor do I believe she knows herself ; but before this letter reaches you, you will have found out. I had almost a mind to ask her to write to me, but then I knew both how she hates it, and how little time she was likely to have, so I forbore. She has left me with the pleasing expectation that any of these days her eccentric musical friend, Dessauer, may walk in, to be by me received, lodged, entertained, comforted, and consoled, in her absence (in which case, by-the-by, you know, I should associate with him while she is away). From parts of his letters, which she has read to me, I feel very much inclined to like him, . . . and I imagine I shall find him very amusing. . . .

You ask about our getting up of "The Hunch-

back " at the Francis Egertons'. I forget whether you knew that Horace Wilson [my kind friend and connection, the learned Oxford Professor of Sanscrit, who to his many important acquirements and charming qualities added the accomplishments of a capital musician and first-rate amateur actor] has been seriously indisposed, and so out of health and spirits as to have declined the part of Master Walter, which he was to have taken in it. This has been a great disappointment to me, for he would have done it admirably, and as he is a person of whom I am very fond, it would have been agreeable to me to have had him among us, and I should have particularly liked him for so important a coadjutor. He failing us, however, Knowles himself has undertaken to play the part, and I shall be glad enough to do it with him again. I have a great deal of compassionate admiration for poor Knowles, who, with his undeniable dramatic genius, his bright fancy, and poetical imagination, will, I fear, end his days either in a madhouse or a poorhouse. The characters beside Sir Thomas Clifford and Modus (which you know are taken by Henry Greville and ——) are filled by a pack of young Guardsmen, with whom I dined, in order to make acquaintance, at Lady Francis's t'other day. Two of them, Captain Seymour and a son of Sir Francis Coles, are acquaintances of yours and your people.

You ask how I am amusing myself. Why, just as usual, which is well enough. I am of too troubled a nature ever to lack excitement, and have an advantage over most people in the diversion I am able to draw from very small sources.

I went last night to the French play, to see a French actress called Déjazet make her first appearance in London. The house was filled with our highest aristocracy, the stalls with women of rank and character, and the performance was, I think, one of the most impudent that I ever witnessed. Dr. Whewell [the celebrated Master of Trinity] and Mrs. Whewell were sitting near us, and left the theatre in the middle of Déjazet's first piece—I suppose from sheer disgust. She is a marvellous actress, and without exception the most brazen-faced woman I ever beheld, and that is saying a great deal. Good-bye.

Ever your affectionate

FANNY.

Harley Street, Saturday, May 14th, 1842.

MY DEAREST HAL,

On my return from Oatlands yesterday, I found no fewer than four letters of yours, and this morning I have received a fifth. . . . I am most thankful for all your details about Adelaide, who, of course, will not have time to write to any of us herself. . . . Miss Rainsforth, her mother, and their travelling manager, Mr. Callcott, are her whole party. . . . Miss Rainsforth is a quiet, gentle, well-conducted, well-bred, amiable person; Mr. Callcott is a son of the composer, and a nephew of our friend, Sir Augustus, and has the refinement of mind and manners which one would look for in any member of that family. . . . I am very sorry that Adelaide cannot see more of you, and you of her. . . .

You ask whether it is a blessing or a curse not to

provide one's own means of subsistence? I think it is a great blessing to be able and allowed to do so. But I dare say I am not a fair judge of the question, for the feeling of independence and power consequent upon earning large sums of money has very much destroyed my admiration for any other mode of support; and yet certainly my *pecuniary* position now would seem to most people very far preferable to my former one; but having *earned* money, and therefore most legitimately *owned* it, I never can conceive that I have any right to the money of another person. . . . I cannot help sometimes regretting that I did not reserve out of my former earnings at least such a yearly sum as would have covered my personal expenses; and having these notions, which impair the comfort of *being maintained*, I am sometimes sorry that I no longer possess my former convenient power of coining. I do not think I should feel so uncomfortable about inheriting money, though I had not worked for it; for, like any other free gift, I think I should consider that legitimately my own, just like any other present that was made me. . . .

"The Hunchback" is to be acted at the Francis Egertons', in London, though I do not very well see how; for Bridgewater House is in process of rebuilding, and their present residence in Belgrave Square, though large enough for all social purposes, is far from being well adapted to theatrical ones; insomuch—or, rather, so little—that it is my opinion we shall be in each others' arms, laps, and pockets throughout the whole performance, which will be inconvenient, and in some of the situations slightly indecorous.

I have received this morning, my dear, your notice of the "Sonnambula," for which we are all very grateful to you. Give my love to my sister. I expected her success as a matter of course, and did not anticipate much annoyance to her from her present mode of life, . . . because I have known her derive extreme amusement and diversion from circumstances and associates that would have been utterly distasteful to me. Her love and perception of the ridiculous is not only positive enjoyment, but a protection from annoyance and a mitigation of disgust. My father desires his love to you, and bids me thank you for your kindness in sending him the newspapers. With regard to that last song in the "Amina," of which you speak as of a *tour de force*, it is hardly so much so, in point of fact, as her execution of the whole part, which is too high for her; and though she sings it admirably in spite of that, she cannot give it the power and expression that she would if it lay more easily in her voice. This, however, is the case with other music that she sings, and the consequence is that, though she has great execution, and power, and sweetness, and finish in the use of her artificial voice, it wants the spontaneous force in high music of a naturally high organ.

Pray, did you ever pity me as much as you do Adelaide in the exercise of her profession? You certainly never expressed the same amount of compassion for my strolling destinies, nor did I ever hear you lament in this kind over the fate of John Kemble and Mrs. Siddons, both of whom had impertinences addressed to them by your Dublin gallery humourists.

Pray, what is the meaning of this want of feeling on your part for *us others*, or your excess of it for Adelaide? Is it only singing histrions who appear to you objects of compassion? Good-bye, dearest Harriet. I have to write to Emily, and to answer an American clergyman, a friend of mine, who has written to me from Paris; and, moreover, being rather in want of money, I am about to endeavour to make practicable for the English stage a French piece called "*Maiselle de Belle Isle*," which, with certain vicious elements, has some very striking and effective situations, and is, dramatically speaking, one of the most cleverly constructed plays I have seen for a long while. Therefore, farewell. If I could *earn* £200 now, I should be glad.

Harley Street, Thursday, May 19th, 1842.

Thank you, my dearest Harriet, for your long account of Adelaide. She has written to my father, which I was very glad of. . . . Of course, I have not expected to hear from her, but have been delighted to get all your details. In her letter to my father, she says she gets on extremely well with her companions, that they are gay and merry, and that her life with them is pleasant and amuses her very much.

You do not ask me a single question about a single thing, and therefore I will just tell you how matters in general go on with me. In the first place, I heard yesterday that we are definitely to return to America in August. Some attempt was made to renew our lease of this house for a few months; but difficulties have arisen about it, and we shall probably return to

the United States as soon as possible after our lease expires. I do not yet feel at all sure of the fulfilment of this intention, however; but at any rate it is one point of apparent decision indicated. . . .

My feelings and thoughts about the return are far too numerous and various to be contained in a letter. One thing I think—I feel sure of—*that it is right*, and therefore I am glad we are to do it. My father, to whom this intention has not yet been mentioned, is looking wonderfully well, and appears to be enjoying his mode of life extremely. He spends his days at Covent Garden, and finds even now, when the German company are carrying on their *operations* there, enough to do to keep him interested and incessantly busy within those charmed and charming precincts. I am pretty well, though not in very good spirits; my life is much more quiet and regular than when you were here, and I enjoy a considerable portion of retiracy.

I have taken possession of Adelaide's little sitting-room, and inhabit it all day, and very often till tea-time in the evening. Owing to our day no longer being cut to pieces by our three-o'clock dinner (on account of Adelaide), I do not run into arrears with my visits, and generally, after discharging one or two recent debts of that sort, am able to get an hour's walk in Kensington Garden and come home between four and five o'clock.

We have not been out a great deal lately; we have taken, I am happy to say, to discriminating a little among our invitations, and no longer accept everything that offers.

I spent three delightful days at Oatlands, which

is charming to me from its own beauty and the association of the pleasure which I enjoyed there in past years. The hawthorn was just coming into blossom, the wild heaths and moors and commons were one sheet of deep golden gorse and pale golden broom, and nothing could be lovelier than the whole aspect of the country.

The day before yesterday I dined *tête-à-tête* with Mademoiselle d'Este, for whom I have taken rather a fancy, and who appears to have done the same by me. Her position is a peculiar and trying one, combined with her character, which has some striking and interesting elements. She is no longer young, but has still much personal beauty, and that of an order not common in England: very dark eyes, hair, and complexion, with a freedom and liveliness of manner and play of countenance quite unusual in Englishwomen. . . . She lives a great deal alone, and reads a great deal, and thinks a little, and I feel interested in her. She has sacrificed the whole comfort and, it appears to me, much of the possible happiness of her life to her notion of being a princess, which, poor thing! she is not; and as she will not be satisfied with, or even accept, the position of a private gentlewoman, she is perpetually obliged to devise means of avoiding situations, which are perpetually recurring, in which her real rank, or rather *no* rank, is painfully brought home to her. This unfortunate pretension to princess-ship has probably interfered vitally with her happiness, in preventing her marrying, as she considers, below her birth (*i.e.* royally); and as she is a very attractive woman, and, I should judge, a person of

strong feelings and a warm, passionate nature, this must have been a considerable sacrifice; though in marrying, to be sure, she might only have realized another form of disappointment.

Yesterday we went to a fine dinner at Lord F——'s. He and his sisters are good-natured young people of large fortune, whose acquaintance we made at Cranford, and who are very civil and amiable in their demonstrations of good will towards us. A son of the Duke of Leinster was at this dinner, and invited —— to go with him this morning and see Prince Albert review the Guards; which he has accordingly done.

To-night we go to Sydney Smith's, which I always enjoy exceedingly; and for next week, I am happy to say, we have at present no engagements but a dinner at the Francis Egertons', and another evening at Sydney Smith's. . . .

I believe I have now told you pretty much all I have to tell. I am working at a translation of a French piece called "*Mademoiselle de Belle Isle*," by which I hope to make a little money, with which I should be very glad to pay *Mademoiselle Dévy's* bill for my spring finery.

I went to Covent Garden the other day, to see if I could find anything in the theatre wardrobe that I could make use of for "*The Hunchback*," and did find something; and, moreover, I think *Adelaide* will be able to get her dress for *Helen* from there, though it seemed rather a doleful daylight collection of frippery. My first dress I can make one of my own white muslin ones serve for, my last I shall get beautifully out of my Court costume; so that the three

will only cost me the price of altering them for the private theatrical occasion.

We met at Oatlands Mrs. G——, the mother of the Member for Dublin, who has been preparing herself, by a twelve years' residence on the Continent, for a plunge into savagedom, by a return to her home in Connemara; and it was both comical and sad to hear her first launch out upon the merits of the dear "wild Irish," and her desire to be among and serviceable to "her people," and then, all in the same breath, declare that the mere atmosphere of England and English society was enough to kill any one with "the blue devils" who had ever been abroad; and this, mind you, is the impression British existence makes upon her in the full height of the gay London season. Fancy what she will find Connemara! She knows you and your people, and gave me a most ardent invitation to the savage Ireland where she lives. Poor woman! I pity her; her case is not absolutely unknown to me, or quite without parallel in my own experience.

Good-bye. God bless you.

Your affectionate

F. A. B.

Harley Street.

This letter has been begun a week; it is now Saturday, May 28th, 1842.

MY DEAREST HARRIET,

Pray give my love to Mrs. Kemble, and tell her that the Queen Dowager sent for me to go and pay her a visit yesterday. For goodness' sake, Harriet,

don't misunderstand me, I am only in joke! I live among such very matter-of-fact persons, that I really tremble for an hour after every piece of nonsense I utter. You must observe by this that I am in a painfully frequent state of trepidation; but what I meant by this message to Mrs. Kemble is that I have been extremely amused at her taking the trouble to write to Mrs. George Siddons, to find out "all about" my going to the Drawing-room, and the rumour which had reached her of the Queen having desired to see me. George Siddons told me this himself, and it struck me as such a funny interest in my concerns on the part of Mrs. Kemble, who takes none whatever in *me*, that I thought I would send her word of the piece of preferment which has occurred to me since, viz. being sent for by the Queen Dowager, who desired my friend, Mademoiselle d'Este, to bring me to call upon her. But what wonderful gossip it does seem to be writing gravely round and round from Leamington to London, and from London to Leamington, about!

You ask me how it fares with me. Why, busily and wearily enough. We have had a perfect deluge of invitations lately, two or three thick of a night. . . .

We are going to-night to the Duchess of Sutherland's fancy ball at Stafford House, which is to be a less formal, but not less magnificent, show than the Queen's masque.

I have not begun to rehearse "The Hunchback" yet, for *I* shall not require many rehearsals; but one of our party attended the first this morning, and said all the young amateurs promised very fairly, and that

Henry Greville did his part extremely well, which I am very glad to hear. I have had but one visit from him since his return to town, when, of course, he discussed Adelaide's plans with great zeal. He certainly wishes very much that she should sing at the Opera, but his view of the whole matter is so different from mine . . . that we are not likely to agree very well, even upon so general a point of discussion as her best professional interests.

I am much concerned at your observations about her exhaustion and hoarseness. I am so anxious that her present life should not be prolonged, so anxious that she should realize her very moderate wishes and leave it, that I cannot bear to think of any possible failure of her precious gift from over-exertion. . . . I think, begging your pardon, you talk some nonsense when you compare your existence, as an object of rational pity, with my sister's. All other considerations set apart, there are certain conditions of life, which are the result of peculiar states and stages of society, that are indisputably less favourable for the production of happiness, and the exercise of goodness also, than others. Among these results of over-civilization are the careers of public exhibitors of every description. In judging of their conduct or character, we may make every allowance for the peculiar dangers of their position, and the temptations of their peculiar gifts; but I confess I am amazed at any woman who, sheltered by the sacred privacy of a home, can envy the one or desire the other.

Dearest Harriet, this letter has lain so long unfinished, and I am now so engulfed in all sorts of

worry, flurry, hurry, row, fuss, bustle, bother, dissipation, and distraction, that it is vain hoping to add anything intelligible to it. Good-bye, dearest.

Ever yours,

FANNY.

Harley Street, May 29th, 1842.

DEAREST HARRIET,

This is Sunday, and, owing to my custom of neither paying visits nor going to dinner or evening parties on "the first day of the week," I look forward to a little leisure; though the repeated raps at the door already this morning remind me that it will probably be interrupted often enough to render it of little avail for any purpose of consecutive occupation. . . .

You ask me if I think of "taking to translating." My dear Harriet, if you mean when I return to America, I shall take to nothing there but the stagnant life I led there before, which, in the total absence of any impulse from the external circumstances in which I live and the utter absence of any interest in any intellectual pursuit in those with whom I live, becomes absolutely inevitable; and so I think that, once again in my Transatlantic home, I shall neither originate nor translate anything.

I have "taken to translating" "Mademoiselle de Belle Isle" because my bill at Mademoiselle Dévy's is £97, and I am determined *my brains* shall pay it; therefore, also, I have given my father a ballet on the subject of Pocahontas, and am preparing and altering "Mademoiselle de Belle Isle" for Covent Garden, for

both which pieces of work I hope to get something towards my £97. Besides this, I have offered my "Review of Victor Hugo" to John for the *British Quarterly Review*, of which he is, you know, the editor—of course, telling him that it was written for an American magazine—and he has promised me sixteen guineas for it, if it suits him. Besides this, I have offered Bentley the beginning of my Southern journal, merely an account of our journey down to the plantation. . . . Besides this, I have drawn up and sketched out, act by act, scene by scene, and almost speech by speech, a play in five acts, a sequel to the story of Kotzebue's "Stranger," which I hope to make a good work of. Thus, you see, my brains are not altogether idle; and, with all this, I am rehearsing "The Hunchback" with our amateurs, for three and four hours at a time, attending to my own dresses and Adelaide's (who will attend to nothing), returning, as usual, all the visits, and going out to dinners and parties innumerable. This, you will allow, is rather a double-quick-time sort of existence; but the after-lull of the future will be more than sufficient for rest.

Alexandre Dumas is the author of "Mademoiselle de Belle Isle," and I was led to select that piece to work upon, not so much from the interest of the story, which is, however, considerable, as from the dramatic skill with which it is managed, and the circumstances made to succeed each other. There is, unfortunately, an insuperably objectionable incident in it, which I have done my best to modify; but it is one of the most ingeniously constructed pieces I have seen for a long time, and gives admirable opportunities for

good acting to almost every member of the *dramatis personæ*.

Mademoiselle d'Este has no right to the painful feeling of illegitimacy, for her mother was her father's wife, and therefore she has not, what indeed I can conceive to be, a bitter source of wounded pride and incessant rational mortification. The Duke of Sussex married Lady Augusta Murray, and that, I should think, might satisfy his daughter, in spite of all the Acts of Parliament afterwards devised to restrict and regulate royal marriages. Mademoiselle d'Este's is merely a perpetual protest against an irreversible social decree, and an incessant, unavailing struggle for the observance and respect conventionally due to a rank which is *not* hers; and though it appears to me as senseless a cause of trouble as ever human being chose to accept, yet as incessant bitterness and mortification and annoyance are its results for her, poor soul! of course to her it is real enough, if not in itself in the results she gathers from it.

My dinner has intervened, my dear, since this last sentence, and, moreover, a permission from my sister to inform you that *she is engaged to be married!* . . .

You ask how Adelaide looks after her Dublin campaign. She looks better now, in spite of all her fatigue, than she has done since her return from Italy; her face looks almost fat, to which appearance, however, it is in some degree helped by her hair being already in rehearsal for "The Hunchback," falling in ringlets on each side of her head, which becomes her very much. . . .

I have heard from Elizabeth Sedgwick, and she

concurr in the propriety of my *not* giving Mrs. Child my Southern journal. I shall say no more upon that subject. . . .

Good-bye, dearest Harriet. I look forward with anticipated refreshment to a ride which I have some chance of getting to-morrow, and for which I am really gasping. I got one ride this week, and the escort that came to the door for me touched and flattered me not a little: old Lord Grey and Lady G——, and his two grandsons, and Lord Dacre, and B—— S——, all came up from their part of the town *to fetch me a ride*, which was a great kindness on their part, and an honour, pleasure, and profit to me. God bless you, dear. I feel, as Margery says, “in a kind of bewilder,” but ever yours,

FANNY.

[My first meeting with Mademoiselle d'Este took place at Belvoir Castle, where we were both on a visit to the Duke of Rutland, and where my attention was drawn to the peculiarity of her conduct by my neighbour at the dinner-table, who said to me, just after we had taken our places, “Do you see Mademoiselle d'Este? She will do that now every day while she remains here.” Mademoiselle d'Este at this moment entered the dining-room alone, and passed down the side of the table with an inclination to the duke, and a half-muttered apology about being late. This, it seems, was simply a pretence to cover her determination not to give precedence to any of the women in the house by being taken in to dinner after them. The Duchesses of Bedford and Richmond, the Countess

of Winchelsea, and other women of rank being then at the castle, Mademoiselle d'Este's pretensions stood not the slightest chance of acknowledgment, and she took this quite ineffectual way of protesting against her social position.

Everybody at Belvoir was sufficiently familiar with her to accept these sort of proceedings on her part. To me they seemed more undignified and wanting in real pride and self-respect than a quiet acquiescence in the inevitable would-have-been. The conventional distinction she demanded had been legally refused her, and it was not in the power of the society to which she belonged to give it to her, however much they might have felt inclined to pity her position and excuse her resentment of it. But it was inconceivable to me that she should not either withdraw absolutely from all society (which is what I should have done in her place), or submit silently to an injury against which all protest was vain, which renewed itself, in some shape or other, daily, and which really involved no personal affront to her or injustice to the character of her mother. I thought she made a great mistake, which did not prevent my being attracted by her; and while we were at Belvoir, and immediately afterwards at Lord Willoughby's together, and subsequently on our return to London, we had a good deal of familiar and friendly intercourse with each other, in the course of which I had many opportunities of observing the perpetual struggle she maintained against what she considered the intolerable hardship of her position.

She occupied a pretty little house in Mount Street, Grosvenor Square, and never allowed her servants to

wear anything but the undress of the royal household; the scarlet livery being, of course, out of the question. On one or two occasions I dined with her *tête-à-tête*, and took no notice of the fact, which I remembered afterwards, that she invariably sent the servant out of the room, and helped herself and me with her own hands; but once, when the Duchess of B—— dined with us, and Mademoiselle d'Este had a dumb-waiter placed beside her, and, sending the manservant out of the room, performed all the table service (except, indeed, bringing in the dishes), with our assistance only, the duchess assured me afterwards that this was simply because, in her own house, Mademoiselle d'Este would not submit to the unroyal indignity of being waited upon after her guests at her own table by her own servants.

When the preparations for the fancy ball at the Palace were turning half the great houses in London into milliners' shops, filled with stuffs, and patterns, and pictures, and materials for fancy dresses, and drawings of costumes, and gabbling, shrieking, distracted women, Mademoiselle d'Este consulted me about her dress, and we passed a whole morning looking over a huge collection of plates of historical personages and picturesque portraits of real or imaginary heroines. Among these I repeatedly put aside several that I thought would be especially becoming to her dark beauty and fine figure; and as often was surprised to find that among those I had thus selected she had invariably rejected a certain proportion, among which were two or three particularly beautiful and appropriate, one or other of which I should certainly have

chosen for her above the rest. I couldn't imagine upon what theory of selection she was guiding her examination of the prints until, upon closer examination, I perceived that the only portraits from which she had determined to make her choice of a costume, were those of princesses of blood royal. Poor woman !

I once saw a curious encounter between her and the Marchioness of L——, in which the most insolent woman of the London society of that day was worsted with her own peculiar weapon, by the princess "claimant," and ignominiously beaten from the field.

The occasion of my being presented to the Queen Dowager was this : I had been dining one day with Mademoiselle d'Este, when the Marchioness of Londonderry came in, and read me a note she had received from the Duke of Rutland, in which the latter said that the Queen had asked him why I had not been presented at Court. After Lady Londonderry was gone, I expressed some surprise at this unexpected honour, and some dismay at finding that it was considered a matter of course that, under these circumstances, I should go to the Drawing-room. I felt shy about the ceremony, and sordidly reluctant to spend the sum of money upon my dress which I knew it must cost me. All this I discussed with Mademoiselle d'Este, and expressing my surprise at the Queen's having condescended to ask why I didn't have myself presented, Mademoiselle d'Este exclaimed, "Oh, my dear, those people are so curious !" meaning the Queen and Prince Albert, towards whom she had a great feeling of sore dislike ; but whether she meant by "curious" inquisitive, or singular—*queer*—I didn't ask

her, being rather astonished at this "singular" mode of speaking of our liege lady and her illustrious consort.

Poor Mademoiselle d'Este's feeling of bitterness against the Queen arose, I have since been told, from various small slights which her sensitive pride conceived she had received from her. Mademoiselle d'Este's determination to assert her right to be considered a royal personage had, perhaps, met with some other rebuffs from the Queen, besides the one which she herself told me of with great irritation.

On the occasion of Queen Adelaide's Drawing-rooms, she had always permitted Mademoiselle d'Este to make her entrance by the same approach, and at the same time, with other members of the royal family. After the accession of Queen Victoria, Mademoiselle d'Este claimed the same privilege, which, however, was not granted her. She told me this with many passionate, indignant comments, and apparently desirous that I should be impressed by the superior charm and graciousness of Queen Adelaide, whom she called "her Queen," and of whom she spoke with the most affectionate regard and respect, she said, "You must come with me and see *my* Queen," and accordingly she solicited permission to present me to the Queen Dowager, which was granted, and I went with her one morning to pay my respects to that great and good lady, and was to have done so a second time, but was prevented by our departure from town.

I drove with Mademoiselle d'Este to Marlborough House in the morning, and we were ushered through several apartments into a small-sized sitting-room,

where we were left. After a few moments a lady entered, to whom Mademoiselle d'Este presented me. The Queen Dowager was then apparently between fifty and sixty years old ; a thin, middle-sized woman, with grey hair and a long face, discoloured by the traces of some eruption. She looked in ill health, and was certainly very plain, but her manner and the expression of her face were very gentle and gracious, and her voice, with its German accent, sweet and agreeable. She asked Mademoiselle d'Este if she was going to the Duchess of Sutherland's ball, and on her replying that she was not going, and giving some trifling reason for not doing so, I couldn't help laughing, because on our way to Marlborough House she had told me, with what appeared to me very superfluous wrath and indignation, that she had received an invitation to the duchess's ball, but that as it was coupled with an intimation that it was hoped the persons who had been at the Queen's great fancy ball, given a week before, would wear the same costumes at Stafford House, Mademoiselle d'Este chose to consider this an impertinent dictation, and said first, " she would go in a plain white satin gown," then " in a white muslin petticoat," finally, that " she wouldn't go at all ; " and working herself up by degrees into more fury as she talked, she abused the Duchess of Sutherland vehemently, mimicking her in a most ludicrous manner, and saying that she always reminded her of " a great fat, white, trussed turkey," which comparison and the ridiculous rage in which she made it made me laugh till I cried, in spite of my admiration for the Duchess of Sutherland, whose beauty and gracious sweetness of

manner always seemed to me very charming. When, therefore, Mademoiselle d'Este assigned another reason for not going to the Stafford House ball, in answer to the Queen's inquiry, I couldn't help laughing, and told the Queen the truth was that Mademoiselle d'Este's pride was hurt at being requested to come in the fancy dress she had worn at the Palace; and so, for this imaginary absurd offence she was going to give up a very fine and pleasant *fête*. The Queen laughed, and, turning to Mademoiselle d'Este, said, "Your friend is right. You are very foolish; you will lose a pleasant evening for nothing."

After this the conversation fell on the French plays and the performances of Mademoiselle Déjazet, who was then acting at the St. James's Theatre. The Queen having asked my opinion of these representations, I said I was unwilling to enter upon the subject, as I did not know how far the forms of etiquette would permit me to express what I thought in her Majesty's presence. Upon her pressing me, however, to state my opinion upon the subject, I reiterated what I had said in a previous conversation with Mademoiselle d'Este upon the matter, objecting to the extreme immorality of the pieces, and expressing my astonishment at seeing decent Englishwomen crowd to them night after night, since they certainly would not tolerate such representations on the English stage.

Mademoiselle d'Este replied that that was because, on the English stage, they would be coarse and vulgar. I denied that the difference of language made any essential difference in the matter, though she was certainly right in saying that the less refined style of

English acting might make the offensiveness of such pieces more unpleasantly obtrusive ; but that in looking round the assembly of fine ladies at Déjazet's performances, I comforted myself by feeling very sure that half of them did not understand what they were listening to ; but I think it must have been "nuts" to the clever, cynical, witty, impudent Frenchwoman, to see these *dames trois fois respectables* swallow her performances *sans sourcilliez*.

After some more conversation on general subjects, the Queen Dowager rose, saying she hoped Mademoiselle d'Este would bring me to visit her again ; and so we received our *congé*.

Mentioning the appearance of some eruption on the good Queen's face, reminds me of a painful circumstance which took place one day when, meeting a beautiful child of about four years old, the daughter of one of the ladies of the Court, who was going into the Palace gardens under the escort of her nurse, the Queen stopped the child, and, attracted by her beauty, stooped to kiss her, when the little thing drew back with evident disgust, exclaiming, "No, no ; you have a red face ! Mamma says I must never kiss anybody with a red face." The poor Queen probably seldom received such a plain statement of facts in return for her condescension. Her unostentatious goodness and amiable character have now become matter of history. One of the most characteristic traits of her life was her ordering of her own funeral with a privacy and simplicity more touching than any royal pomp, specifying that her coffin should be carried to the grave by four sailors—a last tribute of affection to her husband's memory.

Among the passages in Charles Greville's Memoirs that shocked me most, and that I read with the most pain, were the coarse and cruel terms in which he spoke of Queen Adelaide.

Mademoiselle d'Este, when far advanced in middle life, married Lord Chancellor Truro. She may have found in so doing a certain satisfaction to her pride which no other alliance with a commoner could have afforded her, since the Lord Chancellor of England (no matter of how lowly an origin), on certain occasions, takes precedence of the whole aristocracy of the land.]

Harley Street, Monday, May 30th, 1842.

MY DEAREST HARRIET,

I have just finished a letter to you, in which I tell you that I have sketched out the skeleton of another tragedy; but I find Emily has been beforehand with me. You ask me what has moved me to this mental effort. My milliner's bill, my dear; which, being £97 sterling, I feel extremely inclined to pay out of my own brains; for, though they received a very severe shock, and one of rather paralyzing effect, upon my being reminded that whatever I write is not my own legal property, but that of another, which, of course, upon consideration, I know; I cannot, nevertheless, persuade myself that that which I invent—*create*, in fact—can really belong to any one but myself; therefore, if anything I wrote could earn me £97, I am afraid I should consider that I, and no one else, had paid my bill.

In thinking over the position of women with regard to their right to their own earnings, I confess to some-

thing very like wrathful indignation ; impotent wrath and vain indignation, to be sure—not the less intense for that, however, for the injustice is undoubtedly great. That a man whose wits could not keep him half a week from starving should claim as his the result of a mental process such as that of composing a noble work of imagination—say "Corinne," for example—seems too beneficent a provision of the law for the protection of male *superiority*. It is true that, by our marriage bargain, they feed, clothe, and house us, and are answerable for our debts (not my milliner's bill, though, if I can prevent it), and so, I suppose, have a right to pay themselves as best they can out of all we are or all we can do. It is a pretty severe puzzle, and a deal of love must be thrown into one or other or both scales, to make the balance hang tolerably even.

Madame de Stäel, I suppose, might have said to Rocca, "If my brains are indeed yours, why don't you write a book like 'Corinne' with them?" You know, though he was perfectly amiable, and she married him for love, he was an intellectual zero ; but perhaps the man who, acknowledging her brilliant intellectual superiority, could say, "Je l'aimerai tant, qu'elle finira par m'aimer," deserved to be master even of his wife's brains. . . . I wish women could be dealt with, not mercifully, nor compassionately, nor affectionately, but *justly* ; it would be so much better—for men.

How can you ask me if I despise, as great gossip, Emily's telling you that I am writing another tragedy ! Why, my dear, I shouldn't consider it despicable gossip if Emily were to tell you what coloured gloves I had on the last time she saw me. Do we not all

three love each other dearly? and is not everything, no matter how trifling, of interest in that case? But Mrs. John Kemble does not pretend to love me dearly, I flatter myself, and therefore her writing to inquire into my proceedings, and for minute details of my presentation at Court, did seem to me contemptible gossip. At her age, perhaps, it is pardonable enough, though it appears to me rather inconsistent, when one has no liking for a person, to trouble one's head about where they go or what they do.

You ask me about the subject of my play. It is one that my father suggested to me years ago, and which grew out of a question as to whether the Stranger (in Kotzebue's play so called) does or does not forgive his unfaithful wife in the closing scene. With several other dramatic schemes, it has hovered dimly before my imagination for some time past. The other night, however, as I was brushing my hair before going to bed, my brain, I suppose, receiving some stimulus from the scrubbing of my skull, the whole idea suddenly came towards me with increasing distinctness, till it gradually stood up as it were from head to foot before me—a very mournful figure, whose form and features were all vividly defined. I instantly caught up S——'s copy-books—there was no other paper at hand—and on the covers of two of them wrote out my play, act by act and scene by scene. . . . The short-lived triumph of this spirit of inspiration died away under the effect of a conversation by which it was interrupted, and I collapsed like a fallen *omelette soufflée* (not to say *souffletée*).

The story of my piece is a sequel to "The Stranger,"

the retribution which reaches the faithless wife and mother in her children, after they grow up ; which, together with the perpetual struggle on the part of her husband (who has taken her home again) not to wound her conscience, which is so sick and sore that every word, breath, and look *does* wound it, might form, I think, an interesting dramatic picture, with considerable elements for poetry to work upon.

I went to the Duchess of Sutherland's fancy ball in my favourite costume, a Spanish dress, which suited my finances as well as my fancy, my person, and my purse ; for I had nothing to get but a short black satin skirt, having beautiful flounces of black lace, high comb, mantilla, and, in short, all things needful already in my own possession.

I have told you of Adelaide's new prospects, in which I rejoice as much as I can rejoice in anything. She is herself very happy, poor child ! and 'tis a pleasure and a positive relief to see her face, with its bright expression of newly dawned hope upon it.

Good night, dear. My head aches, and I feel weary and worn out ; our life just now is one of insane, incessant dissipation. Thank God, I have a bed, and have not lost the secret of sleeping.

Ever yours,

FANNY.

[A long discussion with my wise and excellent friend and connection, Mr. Horace Wilson, induced me to think a good deal upon the possibility of a man, in the position of Kotzebue's "Stranger," receiving back his wife to the home she had deserted. Mr. Wilson

condemned the idea as absolutely inadmissible and fatally immoral. In our Saviour's teaching it is said that a man shall put away his wife for only *one* cause ; but is it said that he shall in every case put her away for *that* cause? and is the offence a wife commits against her husband the one exception to the universal law of the forgiveness which Christ taught? Men have so considered it; and in the general interest of the preservation of society, a wife's fidelity to her duties becomes one of the most important elements of security; the protection of the family, the integrity of inheritance, the rightful descent of property, are all involved in it. But these are questions of social expediency, and, though based on deep moral foundations, are not of such overwhelming moral force as to forbid the contemplation of any possible exception to their authority. I have heard—I know not if it is true—that in some parts of Germany, formerly, where the practice of divorce obtained to a degree tolerated nowhere else in Christendom, it occasionally happened that, after a legal separation and intermediate marriages (sanctioned also by the law), the original pair, set free once more by death or *second divorce*, resumed their first ties—a condition of things which appears monstrous, considered as that which we call marriage, with the English and American branch of the Anglo-Saxon family, the holiest of human ties; with Roman Catholic Christians, an indissoluble bond, sacred as a sacrament of their Church.

Without being able to determine the question satisfactorily in my own mind with reference to the supposed conclusion of the play of "The Stranger," in

which Mr. Wilson said that the husband, receiving his repentant wife in his arms, was highly offensive to all morality, which demanded imperatively her absolute rejection and punishment; I began to consider what sort of escape from punishment it might be which would probably follow the forgiveness of her husband, her readmission to her home, and the renewal of her intercourse with her children. In Kotzebue's play, the persons are all German, and their nationality has to be borne in mind in contemplating Waldburg's possible forgiveness of his wife. Steinforth, his dearest friend, and a man of the highest honour and morality (as conceived by the author), urges upon Waldburg the pardon of Adelaide; urges it almost as a duty, and zealously assists Madame von Wintersen's plan of bringing the unhappy people together, and effecting a reconciliation between them by means of the unexpected sight of their children. Moreover, when Waldburg rejects his friend's advice and entreaties that he will forgive his wife, it is hardly upon the ground of any deep moral turpitude involved in such a forgiveness, but upon the score of the insupportable humiliation of reappearing in the great world of German society to which they both belong, with "his runaway wife on his arm," and the "whispering, pointing, jeering," of which their reconciliation would be the object, winding up with the irrevocable "Never! never! never!"

Nevertheless, in Kotzebue's play he does receive his wife in his arms as the curtain falls, and the German public go home comforted in believing her forgiven. I do not know how the dumb-show at the

end of the English play is generally conducted ; but in my father's instance, I know he so far carried out my friend Horace Wilson's sentiment (which was also his own on the subject) that, while his miserable wife falls senseless at his feet, he turns again in the act of flying from her as the curtain drops, leaving the English public to go home comforted in the belief that he had *not* forgiven her.

The result of these discussions, as I said, led me to imagine how far such a woman would escape her righteous punishment, even if restored to her home ; and in the sequel to "The Stranger," which I endeavoured to construct, I worked out my own ideas upon the subject.

Forgiveness of sin is not remission of punishment ; and the highest justice might rest satisfied with the conviction that God, who forgives every sinner, punishes every sin ; nor can even His mercy remit the righteous consequence ordained by it. God's punishments are *consequences*, the results of His all-righteous laws, *never to be escaped from*, but leaving for ever possible the blessed hope of His forgiveness ; but no one ever yet outran his sin or escaped from its inevitable result.

The grosser human justice, however, which is obliged to execute itself on the bodies of criminals, demands the open degradation and social ostracism of unfaithful wives as a necessary portion of its machinery, and the well-being of the society which it maintains.]

Harley Street, Friday, June 10th, 1842.

MY DEAREST HARRIET,

I finished one letter to you last night, and, finding that I cannot obtain tackle to go on the river this morning and fish, I sit down to write you another. And first, dear, about getting an admission for E—to see our play. I am sorry to say it is not in my power. Thinking I had rather a right to one or two invitations for my own friends on each of the nights, I asked Lady Francis to give me three tickets for the first representation, intending to beg the same number for each night. I gave one to Mr. S——, and another to a nephew of Talma's, a very agreeable French naval officer, with whom we have become acquainted, and who besought one of me. But when I had proceeded thus far in my distribution of admissions, I was told I had committed an indiscretion in asking for any, and that I must return the remaining one, which I did, . . . and when your request came about a ticket for E——, I was simply assured that it was “impossible.” So, dear, you must be, as I must be, satisfied with this decision—which I am not, for I am very sorry. . . . Lady Francis would gladly, I have no doubt, have asked any of my friends had we wished her to do so; she did send an invitation to Horace Wilson and his wife, but that was because he was to have acted for her, and was only prevented by being too unwell to undertake the part.

I am very glad that Captain Seymour likes me, and the liking is very reciprocal. Indeed, I think our whole company presents a very favourable specimen of our young English gentlemen: they are all of

them very young, full of good spirits, amiable, obliging, good-humoured, good-tempered, and well-mannered; in short, I think, very charming.

How shall I feel, you say, acting that part again? . . . My dearest Harriet, thus much at Richmond on Monday morning; it is now Thursday evening, and I have been crying and in a miserable state of mind and body all day long. On Monday we acted "The Hunchback" for the third time, and on Tuesday we all went down to Cranford, and drew long breaths as we got into the delicious air, all fragrant with hay and honeysuckle and syringa. I left my children at what was in posting days a famous country inn, at about half a mile from Lady Berkeley's house, but which, since the completion of the railroad, has become much less frequented and important, but is quiet and comfortable and pleasant enough to make it a very nice place of deposit for my chicks.

On Wednesday afternoon, when I went over to see them, I found F—— pale and coughing, and heard with dismay that the measles were pervading the whole neighbourhood. I went to town that evening to act "The Hunchback" for the last time, and was haunted by horrid visions of my child ill and suffering, and the very first thing I met on entering London was a child's coffin and funeral. You can better judge than I can express how this sort of omen affected my imagination; and in this frame of mind I went through our last representation of "The Hunchback," and did not reach home till the white face of the morning was beginning to look down from the ends of the streets at us.

We did not get to bed till past three, and were up again at a little after seven, in order to take the railroad to Cranford, where we had promised to breakfast. One of our party was too late for the train, and we posted down with four horses in order to save our time, which on the great Ascot day was not, as you may suppose, a very economical proceeding. . . .

Good-bye, dear. I will answer all your questions about "The Hunchback" another time.

Ever yours,

FANNY.

Harley Street, June 12th, 1842.

MY DEAREST HAL,

. . . I am now going to answer your various questions to the best of my ability. You wanted to know how I felt at acting "The Hunchback" again. Why, so horribly nervous the first night, that the chair shook under me while my hair was being dressed. I trembled to such a degree from head to foot, and the rustling of the curl-papers as the man twisted them in my hair almost drove me distracted, for it sounded like a forest cracking and rattling in a storm. After the performance, my limbs ached as if I had been beaten across them with an iron bar, and I could scarcely stand or support myself for exhaustion and fatigue. This, however, was only the first night, and I suppose proceeded from the painful uncertainty I felt as to whether I had not utterly forgotten how to act at all. This one representation over, I had neither fright, nervousness, nor the slightest fatigue, and it is singular enough that no recollections

or associations whatever of past times were awakened by the performance. I was fully engrossed by the endeavour to do the part as well as I could, and, except in the particular of copying, as well as I could recollect it, my dress of former days, the Julia of nine years ago did not once present herself to my thoughts. The first time I played it, I rather think I was worse than formerly, but after that, probably much the same. . . .

How does this dreadfully hot weather agree with you, my dear? For my own part, I am parboiled and stupid beyond all expression. I hate heat always and everywhere, and it seems to me that in our damp climate it is even more oppressive than under the scorching skies of August in Pennsylvania. However, of that I won't be sure, for the present is, with me, always better or worse than the absent.

I think I have nothing more to tell you about "The Hunchback." . . . Beyond doing it as well as I could, I cared very little about it; it seemed a sort of routine business, just as it used to be, except for the inevitable unwholesome results of its being amusement instead of business; the late hours—three o'clock in the morning—and champagne and lobster salad suppers, instead of my former professional decent tea and to bed, after my work, before twelve o'clock.

Adelaide acted Helen charmingly, without having bestowed the slightest pains upon it. Had she condescended to give it five minutes' careful study, it would have been a perfect performance of its kind; but as it was, it was delightfully droll, lively, and graceful, and certainly proved her natural powers of comic acting to be very great. . . .

You ask me about my play. I have not touched it since I wrote to you last, and really do not know when I shall have a minute in which to do so, unless, indeed, in this coming week at Oatlands,—and a great deal may be done in a week; but I am altogether quite down about it. Our last representation of “The Hunchback” was, as in duty bound, the best, and everybody was, or pretended to be, in ecstasies with it. Our time and attention have been so engrossed with the dresses, rehearsals, and performances, that we absolutely seemed to experience a sudden *lull* in our daily lives after it was all over.

I shall probably not be in town till the 24th. I am going down to Mrs. Grote’s with my sister on the 21st, and as S—— is of the party, it will not, I suppose, be according to “received ideas” that I should leave her there. On the 24th, however, she must be back in town; and as for my departure for America, dear Hal, you do well not to grieve too much beforehand about that. . . . Therefore, my dear Hal, lament not over my departure, for Heaven only knows when we shall depart, or if indeed we shall depart at all.

Good-bye.

Ever yours,
FANNY.

Oatlands, June 14th, 1842.

MY DEAREST HAL,

. . . I return to town this evening in order to go to a party at Mrs. Grote’s, to which we have been engaged for some time past, and remain in town

all to-morrow, because we dine at Harness's. . . . The quiet of this place, and very near twelve hours' sleep, and, above all, a temporary relief from all causes of nervous distress, have done me all the good in the world. . . . I cannot but think mine, in one respect, a curious fate; and perhaps, with the magnifying propensity of egotism, I exaggerate what seems to me its peculiarity. But to be placed for years together out of the reach of all society; to be left day after day to the solitude of an absolutely lonely life; to be deprived of all stimulus from without; to hear no music; to see no works of art; to hear no intellectually brilliant or even tolerably cultivated or interesting conversation; indeed, often to pass days without exchanging a thought or even a word with any grown person but my servants; to ride for hours every day alone through lonely roads and paths, sit down daily to a solitary dinner, and pass most of my evenings listening to the ticking of the clock, or wandering round and round the dark garden walks;—to lead, I say, such a life for a length of time, and then be plunged into the existence, the sort of social Maelstrom we are living in here now, is surely a great trial to a person constituted like myself, and would be something of one, I think, to a calmer mind and more equable temperament than mine. . . .

You ask if my father has been told of our intended return to America. I have told him, but neither he nor any one else appears to believe in it; and from what I wrote you in my last letter, I think you will agree that they are justified in their incredulity.

You ask how Adelaide is. Flourishing greatly;

the annoyance and vexation of the late difficulties with the theatre being past, she has recovered her spirits, and seems enjoying to the full her present hopes of future happiness. . . .

God bless you, my dear Hal.

Ever yours,

FANNY.

Oatlands, June 16th, 1842.

MY DEAR T——,

An hour's railroading from London has brought me into a lovely country, 'a perfect English landscape of broad lawns, thick tufted oaks, and placid waters, under my windows. But an hour from that glare, confusion, din, riot, and insanity, to the soothing sights and sounds of this rural paradise! And after looking at it till my spirits have subsided into something like kindred composure and placidity, I open my letter-case, and find your last unanswered epistle lying on the top of it. "If Cunard and Harnden have proved true," you must have received by this time our reply to your proposition touching the Coster business. Thus far on Monday last; and having proceeded thus far, I fell fast asleep, with the pen in my hand, the sound of the rustling trees in my ears, and the smell of the new-mown grass in my nose. Since that noonday nap of mine, I have been back to town for a party at Mrs. Grote's and a dinner at Harness's. I mention names because these worthies are known to Catherine and Kate; and here I am, thanks to the railroad, back again among all these lovely sights and sounds and smells, and pick up my

pen forthwith, to renew my conversation with you. And first, as in duty bound, business. I wrote you word that we did not disdain the compromise offered by Mr. Coster, and we now further beg that you will receive and keep for us the sum proposed by that gentleman as payment of his debt.

Thank you very much for your kindness to H——. Kate wrote me a most ludicrous account of the poor singer's first experiment on his voice in your presence. I have not the least idea what his merits really are, having never heard or, to the best of my knowledge, seen him; but, as a pupil of the Royal Academy, his acquirements ought certainly to be those of a competent teacher. However, I need not, I am sure, tell you that, in recommending him to you, I did not contemplate laying the slightest stress upon your conscience, and having heard him, you must recommend him or not according to that. . . .

My sister thanks you for your zeal on her behalf, and so do I; but you will not be called upon for any further, or rather, I should say, nearer demonstration of it; for the young lady has lately come to the conclusion that marrying and staying at home is better than wandering singing over the face of the earth; and I suppose by next Christmas she will be married. I have no room for more.

Ever yours,

F. A. B.

[My correspondence with my friend Miss S—— was interrupted by a visit of several weeks which she paid us, and not resumed on my part until the month

of August, when I was on my way back from Scotland, and she was travelling on the Continent with her friend Miss W——.]

Liverpool, Wednesday, August 10th, 1842.

MY DEAREST HARRIET,

You bid me write to you immediately upon receiving your letter of the 24th of July, dated from Ulm, but I only received that letter last night on my arrival here from Scotland, and I know not how long its rightful delivery to me has been delayed. I fear, in consequence of this circumstance, that this answer to it may miscarry; for perhaps you will have left Munich by the time it gets there. However, I can but do as you bid me, and so I do it, and hope this, for me, rare exercise of the virtue of obedience may find its reward in my letter reaching you.

I am glad your meeting with the Combes was so pleasant. I can bear witness to the truth of their melancholy account of dear Dr. Combe, whom I went to see while I was in Edinburgh. He is so emaciated that the point of his knee-bone, through his trousers, perfectly fascinated me; I couldn't keep my eyes off it, it looked so terribly and sharply articulated that it seemed as if it were coming through the cloth. His countenance, however, was the same as ever, or, if possible, even brighter, sweeter, and more kindly benevolent. I have always had the most affectionate regard and admiration for him, and think him in some respects superior to his brother.

I am delighted to think of your fine weather, and the great enjoyment it must be to you two, so happy

in each other, to travel through the lovely summer days together, filling your minds and storing your memories with beautiful things of art and nature, which will be an intellectual treasure in common, and a fountain of delightful retrospective sympathy. . . .

You must continue to direct to Harley Street, for although we were, by our original agreement, to have left it on the 1st of August, I conclude, as it is now the 10th, and I have heard no word of our removing, that some arrangement has been made for our remaining there, at least till our departure, which I understand is fixed for October 21st. . . .

I have received a letter from Elizabeth Sedgwick, informing me that Kate's marriage is to take place about October 10th. I shall not be at it, which I regret very much.

In the same letter she tells me that Dr. Channing is spending the summer at Lenox; and that he had shown her a most interesting letter he had received from a house-builder in Cornwall, England. This man wrote to Channing to thank him for the benefit he had derived from his writings, particularly his lectures on the mental elevation of the working classes. Dr. Channing answered this letter, and the poor man was so overjoyed at this favour, as he esteemed it, that he could not refrain from pouring out his thankfulness in another letter, in which he assured his reverend correspondent that the influence of his writings upon his class of the community in that part of England was and had been very great, and instanced a fellow-artizan of his own, who said that Channing's writings had reconciled him to being a working man. Elizabeth

said that Dr. Channing, while reading this letter, was divided between smiles and tears. She also told me that he had talked to her a good deal about Mrs. Child (you know, the abolitionist who wanted to publish my Southern journal); she is a correspondent of his, and a person for whom he has the highest esteem, regarding her as "a most highly principled and noble-minded woman."

I am so tired, dearest Hal, and feel such a general lassitude and discouragement of mind and body, that I will end my letter. Give my most affectionate love to Dorothy, whom I should love dearly if I saw her much. I wish I was with you, seeing the Danube, that river into which poor Undine carried her immortal soul, and her broken woman's heart, when she faded over the boat's side, saying, "Be true, be true, oh, misery!" God bless you, dearest Hal.

Ever yours,

FANNY.

Harley Street, September 16th, 1842.

MY DEAREST HAL,

You ask me what I am doing. Flying about in every direction, like one distracted, trying to *amuse* myself; going to evenings at Lady Lansdowne's, and to mornings at the Duchess of Buccleuch's; dining at the Star and Garter at Richmond, in gay and great company, and driving home alone between one and two o'clock in the morning. . . .

I have undertaken to keep and to ride S——'s horse while he is away; and I think, by means of regular exercise, I shall at any rate keep *paroxysms*

aloof. I am going to a ball at Lord Foley's on Monday; to a children's play at the Francis-Egertons' on Tuesday; to Richmond again to dine with the Miss Berrys and Lady Charlotte Lindsay on Wednesday; on Thursday to dine at Horace Wilson's, etc. . . . Perhaps you will wonder, as I do sometimes, that I keep the few senses I have in the life I lead; but so it is, and so it has to be.

Good-bye. God bless you. I keep this letter till I hear from you where to send it, and, with dearest love to Dorothy, am,

Ever yours,

FANNY.

Harley Street, September 30th, 1842.

MY DEAREST GRANNY (LADY DACRE),

Yesterday morning we drove down to Chesterfield Street, not without sundry misgivings on my part that Lord Dacre would feel that we persecute him, that he might be busy, and not like being interrupted, etc. When the door was opened, however, and while we were still interrogating the footman, his own dear lordship came to it, and graciously bade me alight, which of course I gladly did, and so we sat with him a matter of half an hour, hearing his discourse, which ran at first on you and the dear girls (his grand-daughters), and then broadened gradually from private interests to his public experience, and all the varied observation of his honourable political career. "I could have stayed all night to have heard good counsel," but was obliged to drive to the theatre to fetch my sister from rehearsal, and so, most reluctantly,

came away. It seemed to me very good, and amiable, and humane, and condescending of Lord Dacre to spare so much of his time and attention to us young and insignificant folk: the courtesy of his reception was as deeply appreciated by me, I assure you, as the interest of his conversation: and so tell my lord, with my best of courtesies.

I went in the evening to hear my sister sing "*Norma*" for the last time, and cried most bitterly, and moreover thought exceedingly often of your ladyship, and why? I'll tell you: it was the *last* time she was to do so, and when I saw that grace and beauty and that union of gifts which were adapted to no other purpose half so well as to this of dramatic representation: when I heard the voice of popular applause, that utterance of human sympathy, break at once simultaneously from all those human beings whose emotions she was swaying at her absolute will,—my heart sank to think that this beautiful piece of art (for such it now is, and very near perfection), would be seen no more; that this rare power, a talent, as it verily then seemed to me, in the solemn sense of the word, and a precious one of its own kind, was about to be folded in a napkin, so bear witness no more, of profit or pleasure, to herself or others.

My dear Granny, you will well understand how I came to think of you during that performance: for the first time, I thought *like* you on this subject. I caught myself saying, while the tears streamed down my face, "*If she is only happy, after all!*" (But oh, that *if!*!) It seemed amazing to abdicate a secure fortune, and such a power—power to do anything so excellently

(putting its recognition by the public entirely out of account) for that fearful risk. God help us all! 'Tis a hard matter to judge rightly on any point whatever; and settled and firm as I had believed my opinion on this subject to be, I was surprised to find how terrible it was to me to see my sister, that woman most dear to me, deliberately leave a path where the sure harvest of her labour is independent fortune, and a not unhonourable distinction, and a powerful hold upon the sympathy, admiration, and even kindly regard of her fellow-creatures, while she thus not unworthily ministers to their delight, for a life where, if she does not find happiness, what will atone to her for all this that she will have left? However, I have need to remember, while thinking of her and her future, what I have never forgotten hitherto, that the soul lives neither on fortune, fame, nor happiness; and that which is noblest in her, which is above either her genius, grace, or beauty, and far more precious than all of them united, will thrive, it may be, better in obscurity, and the different trials of her different life than in the vocation she is now abandoning. *Amen!*

Thank you, my dear Granny, for all your advice, and still more for the love which dictates it; I lay both to heart. Thank you, too, for the little book. I wish I knew the woman who wrote it; she must be a paragon.

God bless you, dear Granny. I write you a kiss as the children do, and am

Ever your affectionate

FANNY.

Harley Street, October 2nd, 1842.

MY DEAR T——,

It is hardly of any use writing to you, because, unless I am “drowned in the ditch,” I shall see you very soon after you get this letter. I have, however, as I believe you know, a very decided principle upon the subject of answering letters, and therefore shall duly reply to your epistle, though I hope to follow this in less than a fortnight.

I am sorry to say that if your ever feeling young again” is to depend upon your seeing a *Miss Kemble* once more in America, you are doomed to disappointment, and must decidedly go on, not only growing, but feeling old, as *Miss Kembles* there are now no more—at least at my father’s house. . . . So you see a due regard for her fellow-creatures on the other side of the Atlantic has not existed in my sister’s heart, or she would, of course, have postponed all personal prospects of happiness, or rather peace and quiet, to a proper consideration for the gratification of the American public.

I think your observations upon my projected journey to Georgia are taken from an entirely mistaken point of view. I am utterly unconscious of entertaining any inimical feeling towards America or the Americans; on the contrary, I am distinctly conscious of the highest admiration for your institutions, and an affectionate regard for the northern part of your country (where those institutions can alone be said to be put in practice) that is second only to the love and reverence I bear to my own country. This being the case, I cannot think that anything I write about

America can, with any sort of propriety, be characterized as "the lashings of a foe."

With regard to Dickens, I do not know exactly what proceedings of his you refer to as exhibiting want of taste or want of temper towards your country-people. . . . But small counterweights may surely be allowed to such admirable qualities of both head and heart as he possesses. He sent me, on his return to England, a printed circular, which was distributed among all his literary acquaintances and friends, and which set forth his views with regard to the question of international copyright; but except this, I know of nothing that he has publicly put forth upon the matter. His "Notes" upon America come out, I believe, immediately; and I shall be extremely curious to see them, and sorry if they are unfavourable, because his popularity as a writer is immense, and whatever he publishes will be sure of a wide circulation. Moreover, as it is very well known that, before going to America, he was strongly prepossessed in favour of its institutions, manners, and people, any disparaging remarks he may make upon them will naturally have proportionate weight, as the deliberate result of experience and observation. M—— told me, after dining with Dickens immediately on his return, that one thing that had disgusted him was the almost universal want of conscience upon money matters in America; and the levity, occasionally approaching to something like self-satisfaction, for their "sharpness," which he had repeated occasions of observing, in your people when speaking of the present disgraceful condition of their finances, and deservedly degraded state of their national

credit. . . . But I do hope (because I have a friend's and not a "foe's" heart towards your country) that Dickens will not write unfavourably about it, for his opinion will influence public opinion in England, and deserves to do so.

As for Lord Morpeth, you need not be afraid of his "booking" you; he is the kindest gentleman alive, and moreover, I think, far too prudent a person for such a proceeding. . . .

Lord Ashburton's termination of the boundary question is vehemently abused by the Opposition; but that is of course. Some old-school Whigs, sound politicians, and great friends of mine, were agreeing quietly among themselves the other day, that *anyhow* they were heartily glad that there was to be no war between the countries.

I perceive, however, that the question of the right of search (*question brûlante*, as the French say) is still untouched, or rather unsettled; yet in my opinion it contains more elements of danger than the other. But I suppose your great diplomatists think one question settled in twenty years is quite enough for the rapid pace at which our Governments pant and puff after public opinion in these steam-speed-thinking times.

We have been in the country till within the last fortnight, but have come up to town to prepare for our departure. London is almost empty, but the only topics that keep alive the sparse population of the club-houses are the dismissal of Baroness L—— from Court and her departure for Germany, and a terrible *esclandre* in a very high circle, including royal personages. . . . I treat you to the London scandal, and

my doing so is ridiculous enough ; but there is nothing I would not sooner write about than myself and my own thoughts, feelings, and concerns, just now. How thankful I shall be when this month is over ! . . .

Believe me yours most truly,

F. A. B.

Harley Street, Saturday, 8th, 1842.

MY DEAR GRANNY,

I dined yesterday at Charles Greville's, where dined also Mr. Byng ; both of them, I believe, were your fellow-guests lately, at the Duke of Bedford's. Among other Woburn talk, there was no little discourse about B——. Westmacott, too (the sculptor), who is a very old friend of ours, chimed in, and we had a very pretty chorus on the argument of her fine countenance, striking appearance, intelligence, etc., which I listened to and joined in with great pleasure, because I love the child ; thinking, at the same time, how many qualities, of which perhaps her gentleman eulogists took no cognizance, went to make up the charm of the outward appearance which they admired—the candour, truth, humility, and moral dignity, the “inward and spiritual grace,” of which what they praised is but “the outward and visible sign.” As I know this, the commendation of her superficial good gifts, by superficial observers, was very agreeable to me.

You ask me if I think you are going to keep up a correspondence with me at this rate. I do not know exactly what that means ; but be sure of one thing, that as long as I can succeed in drawing an answer out of you, I shall *persevere*.

My father has a violent lumbago; so, I am sorry to say, has the theatre, which, in spite of my sister's exertions, can hardly keep upon its legs. Her success has to compensate for the deplorable houses on the nights when she does not appear. But great as her success is, it will not make the nights pay on which she does not sing, when the theatre is absolutely empty. What they will do when she goes I cannot in the smallest degree conceive. *We* are just being sucked into the Maelstrom of bills, parcels, packages, books, pictures, valuables, trumpery, rummaging, heap-ing together, throwing apart, selecting, discarding, and stowing away that precedes an orderly departure after a two years' disorderly residence; in the midst of all which I have neither leisure nor leave to attend to the heartache which, nevertheless, accompanies the whole process with but little intermission.

Love to your dear lord and the dear girls, and believe me ever, my dear Granny,

Your affectionate

FANNY.

Harley Street, Friday 14th, 1842.

DEAR GRANNY,

I find there is every probability of our not leaving England until the 4th of November (several people tell me they have been told so), and such is the extreme uncertainty of our movements always, that it would not surprise me very violently if we did not go then. I fear, however, this will not afford me any further glimpses of you; and, indeed, at the bottom of my heart, I do not wish for any more "last dying

speeches and confessions." To part is very bad, but to keep continually parting is unendurable.

My sister goes on with the "Semiramide," and her attraction in it increases. She acts and sings admirably in it, and, all sisterly prepossessions apart, looks beautiful.

We went the other night to see "As You Like It" at Drury Lane. It was *painfully* acted, but the scenery, etc., were charming; and though we had neither the caustic humour or poetical melancholy of Jacques, nor the brilliant wit and despotical fancifulness of the princess shepherd-boy duly given, we *had* the warbling of birds, and sheep-bells tinkling in the distance to comfort us. I hope it is not profanation to say, "These should ye have done, and not have left the others undone." Nevertheless, and in spite of all, the enchantment of Shakespeare's inventions is such to me that they cannot be marred, let what will be done to them. As long as those words of profoundest wisdom and those images of exquisite beauty are but uttered, their own perfection swallows up all other considerations and impressions with me, and I bear indifferent and even bad acting of Shakespeare better than most people.

Why did you not make *him*, instead of the stage, the subject of our discussions together? For his works my enthusiasm grows every year of my life into a profounder and more wondering love and admiration.

I am grateful for Lord Dacre's offer, though it was not made to me; and, had it been so, should have closed with it eagerly. To correspond with one who

has seen and known and *thought* so much is a rare privilege.

Good-bye, dear Granny. Give my love to the girls, and my "duty" to my lord, and believe me,

Your affectionate

FANNY BUTLER.

Harley Street, Friday, 23rd, 1842.

MY DEAR GRANNY,

That last half-hour before we got off from "The Hoo" the other day was a severe trial to my self-command; but I was anxious not to afflict you, and I was willing, if possible, to begin the bitter series of partings, of which the next month will be one succession, with something like fortitude, however I may end it. Thank you for writing to me, and thank you for all your kindness to me through these many years, now that you have *persevered* in being fond of me. . . .

Do not be anxious about my happiness, my dear friend, but pray for me, that I may be enabled to do what is right under all circumstances; and then it cannot fail to be well with me, whether to outward observation I am what the world calls happy or not.

Give my affectionate love to Lord Dacre, and thank him for all his goodness to me and mine. I send my blessing to the girls. I have written to B——. God bless you all, my kind friends, and make life and its vicissitudes minister to your happiness hereafter.

You will hear of me, dear Granny, for the girls will write to me, and I shall answer them, and you will

remember, whenever you think of me, how gratefully and affectionately I must

Ever remain yours,

FANNY BUTLER.

[Lady Dacre saw much trouble in store for me in my intemperate expression of feeling on the subject of slavery in America, and repeatedly warned me with affectionate solicitude to moderate, if not my opinions, the vehement proclamation of them. She was wise and right, as well as kind in her advice.]

[Extract from a letter of Miss Sedgwick's.]

Stockbridge, October 26th, 1842.

You have no doubt heard and lamented the death of our dear friend, Dr. Channing. Dead he is not; he lives, and will live in the widespreading life he has communicated. He passed the summer at Lenox, occupying with his family your rooms at the hotel. We passed some hours of every day together. He enjoyed our lovely hill country with the freshness of youth, his health was invigorated, and his mind freer, and his spirits more buoyant than I ever knew them; he endured more fatigue than he had been able to encounter since he travelled in Switzerland fifteen years ago. His affectionateness, purity, simplicity—a simplicity so perfect that it seemed divine—surrounded his greatness with an atmosphere of light and beauty. His life has been a most prosperous one, no storms without, and a heavenly calm within. His last work in his office was a discourse which he delivered in our village church on the 1st of August, on

the emancipation of the slaves in the British West Indies. I shall send it to you, and pray mark the prophetic invocation with which it concludes. You should have seen the inspired expression of his intellectual brow, and the earnest, spiritual look that seemed to penetrate the clouds that hang over the eternal world and to reflect its light. On the Sundays of his sojourn with us he had domestic worship in our houses, and his last service was in that apartment where his beloved friend, Follen, officiated. . . .

Eliza Follen is recovering the elasticity of her mind. Time can, I think, do all things, since it has dissipated that horrible image of the burning steamer in which her husband perished, that was ever before her. She is publishing his Memoirs, and, among other things, she read me some patriotic songs which he wrote in Sand's time in Germany; they were in the boldest tone of insurrection, and were, of course, proscribed and suppressed. She had heard her husband occasionally hum a stanza or two of them, and he had once written out a single one for her which she found in her work-basket. This she transmitted to his mother in Germany, and with this clue alone the mother obtained the rest; and eloquent outbursts they are of a spirit glowing with freedom and humanity. . . .

I have passed lately a day at our State Lunatic Asylum. On my first going there, in the evening the physician invited me into the dancing-hall, where some sixty of the patients were assembled. The two musicians were patients, one utterly *demented*, incapable of any reasonable act except playing a tune

on his violin, which he did with accuracy. Except the doctor's children (as beautiful as cherubs, and ministering angels they are), there were no sane persons among the dancers. "There," said the physician, "is a homicide; there, a poor girl, who went crazy the day after her brother drowned himself, and who fancies herself that brother; there, the King of England," etc. They were all dancing with the utmost decorum and regularity. They attend chapel on a Sunday without disturbance; they were all (among them maniacs who had been for half a score of years chained in dungeons of our common gaols) "clothed," and, if not "in their right mind," comfortable and cheerful; they *all* had plants in their rooms and books on their tables. Much depends on individual character, and the physician is, as you would expect, a man of the highest moral power, and the very embodiment of the spirit of benevolence, and if poetry and painting had laid their heads together to give him a fitting form, they could have done nothing better than nature has. My heart was ready to burst with gratitude. Who can say the world does not move some forward steps?

Clarendon Hotel, November 6th, 1842.

DEAR GRANNY,

You know that it is now determined that we do not sail by the next steamer. . . .

Dearest Granny, do not you, any more than I do, reckon which love is best worth having, of young or old love; for all love is *inestimable*, and should be gratefully rendered thanks for. There is something

charming and *pathetic* in the *profusion* with which the young love; it is touching, as one of the magnificent superabundances, one of the generous extravagances of their prodigal time of life. But the love of the old is as precious as the beggared widow's mite; and in bestowing it they know what they give, from a store that day by day diminishes. The affections of the young are as sudden and soft, as bright and bounteous, as copious and capricious as the showers of spring; the love of the old is the one drop in the cruse, which outlasts the journey through the desert.

You may perhaps see in the papers a statement of the disastrous winding up of the season at Covent Garden, or rather, its still more disastrous abrupt termination. After our all protesting and remonstrating with all our might against my father's again being involved in that Heaven-forsaken concern, and receiving the most positive and solemn assurances from those who advised him into it for the sake of having his name at the head of it, that *no* responsibility or liability whatever should rest upon or be incurred by him; and that if the thing did not turn out prosperously, it should be put an end to, and the theatre immediately closed;—they have gone on, in spite of night after night of receipts below the expenses, and now are obliged suddenly to shut up shop, my poor father being, as it turns out, personally involved for a considerable sum.

This, as you will well believe, is no medicine for his malady. I spend every evening with him, and generally see him in the morning besides. These last few days he suffers less acute pain, but complains

more of debility, and hardly leaves his sofa, where he lies silent, with his eyes closed, apparently absorbed in painful sensations and reflections. Yet, though he neither speaks to nor looks at me, he likes to have me there; and, as Horace Twiss said, "to hear the scissors fall" now and then, by way of companionship; and certainly derives some comfort from the mere consciousness of my presence.

My sister has gone to Brighton for a few days, her health having quite given way, what with hard work and harder worry. She returns on Monday, but it is extremely doubtful whether she will resume her performances at all, so that I fear the expectations of the clan Cavendish will be disappointed.

She did act most charmingly in the "Matrimonio Segreto." In point of fact, her comic acting is more perfect than her tragic, although there are not in it, and naturally cannot be, the same striking exhibitions of dramatic power; but it is smoother, more even, better finished.

You must get Lady Callcott's "Scripture Herbal." Lady Grey lent it me, and I read it with great pleasure. It is an interesting, graceful, and learned work, which she has illustrated very exquisitely. There is something very sweet and soothing in the idea of last thoughts having been thus devoted to what is loveliest in nature, and holiest in religion.

God bless you, dear Granny. Give my love to the lasses, and my affectionate "duty" to my lord; and believe me,

Your loving grandchild,

F. A. B.

[Our departure for America was indefinitely postponed, and the American nurse I had brought to England with my children left me and returned home alone.]

The Clarendon, Monday, November 28th, 1842.

MY DEAREST GRANNY,

I duly delivered your message, and am desired to tell you that a house is being looked for for us in your neighbourhood, and that, as soon as one is found that we think you will approve of, it will be taken. Moreover, I am desired to add that the expensive reputation of the Clarendon is very much exaggerated. . . . We have been here a fortnight to-day, and I think there is every probability of our being here at least a fortnight longer, even if we get away then. . . . My father suffers less acutely these last few days, but his debility appears to increase with the decrease of his positive pain. . . .

My sister returned from Brighton to-day, completely set up again; she is to go on with her performances till Christmas, when the whole concern passes into the hands of Mr. Bunn, who perhaps is qualified to manage it.

I think I should like to *act* with my sister during this month, in order to secure their salaries to the actors, to make up the deficit which now lies at the door of my father's management, to put a good benefit into his poor pocket, to give rather a more cheerful ending to my sister's theatrical career, and though last, not least, for the pleasure and *fun* of acting with

her. Don't you think we should have good houses ? and wouldn't *you* come and see us ? . . .

God bless you, dear Granny.

Ever your affectionate

F. A. B.

The Clarendon, December 1st, 1842.

MY DEAREST HARRIET,

Lord Titchfield, who was here yesterday, begged me to ascertain from you whether it is only *my* bust that you desire, or whether you would like to have casts from my father's and from the two of Adelaide. Write me word, dear, that the magnificent marquis may fulfil your wishes, which he is only waiting to know in order to send the one or the four heads to you in Ireland. . . .

My sister returned from Brighton on Monday, apparently quite recovered ; in good looks, good voice, and good spirits. The horrible mess in which everybody is mixed up who has anything to do with Covent Garden, and in which she is so deeply involved, renewed her annoyances and vexations immediately on her arrival in town ; but I passed the evening with her yesterday, and she did not seem the worse for work or worry, for she sang, for her own pleasure and that of her guests, the whole evening. . . .

Give my kind remembrances to all your people, and believe me,

Ever yours,

FANNY.

[The Marquis of Titchfield was employing the

French sculptor, Dantan, to make busts of my father, my sister, and myself, for him ; and most kindly gave me casts of them all, and sent my friend, Miss St. Leger, a cast of mine.]

The Clarendon, January 5th, 1843.

DEAREST HAL,

I have sent your wishes to Lord Titchfield, and I am sure they will be quickly complied with. I have no idea that he means otherwise than to *give* you my bust ; any other species of transaction being apparently quite out of his line, and *giving* his especial gift. I have, nevertheless, taken pains to make clear to him your intentions in the matter ; I have desired him to have the bust forwarded to the care of Mr. Green, because I thought you would easily find means of transporting it thence to Ardgillan. Was this right ?

The houses at Covent Garden are quite full on my sister's nights, but deplorably empty on the others, I believe. I speak from hearsay, for I have not been into the theatre since the terrible business of the late break-up there, and do not think I shall even see her last performances, for I have no means of doing so ; I can no longer ask for private boxes, as during my father's management, of course, nor indeed would it be right for me to do so on her nights, because they all let very well ; and as for paying for one, or even for a seat in the public ones, I have not a single farthing in the world to apply to such a purpose. . . . So you see, my dear, I am in no case to treat myself to seats at the play, either private or public.

Adelaide is still pretty well. The night before last

was her benefit; she had a very fine house, and sang "Norma," and the great scene from "Der Freyschutz," and "Auld Robin Gray;" and yesterday evening she seemed very tired, but she had people to dinner and to tea nevertheless. . . .

Certainly one had need believe in something better than one sees, or at any rate than I see just now; for such petty selfishnesses and despicable aims, pursued with all the energy and eagerness which should be bestowed upon the highest alone; such cheating, tricking, swindling, lying, and slandering, are enough to turn any Christian cat's stomach. . . .

I must tell you two things about Miss Hall that have given me such an insight into the delights of the position of an English governess as I certainly never had before. When first she joined us here at the Clarendon, Anne was still with us, and she, being always accustomed to take her meals with the children, and yet of course not a proper companion for Miss Hall, we thought that till the nurse went to America we would request the governess to dine with us. On Anne's departure, I signified to the head waiter that from that time Miss Hall would take her dinner with the children; whereupon, with a smirk and sniff of the most insolent disdain, and an air of dignity that had been hurt, but was now comforted, the bloated superior servant replied, "Well, ma'am, to be sure, it always was so in *them famullies* where I have lived; the governess never didn't eat at the table." The fact is natural, and the reason obvious, but oh! my dear, the manner of the fat, pampered porpoise of a man-ménial was too horrid. Then, on going for a candle into Miss

Hall's room one evening, I found she had been provided with tallow ones, and, upon remonstrating about it with the chambermaid, she replied (with a curtsy at every other word to me), "Oh, ma'am, we always puts *tallow* for the governesses."

Good-bye, dear. God bless you.

Ever yours,

FANNY.

Cranford House, January 8th, 1843.

DEAREST HAI,

I am spending two days at Cranford—you know, I believe where I mean, old Lady Berkeley's place. . . . I came to get the refreshment of the country; old Lady Berkeley is very kind to me, and I like her daughters, Lady Mary particularly. I came down yesterday (Saturday), and shall return early to-morrow, for on Wednesday the children are to have a party of their little friends, and I am making a Christmas-tree for them (rather out of date), and expect to be exceedingly busy both to-morrow and Tuesday, in preparing for their amusement.

My father does not suffer nearly as much pain as he did a short time ago, but his strength appears to me to be gradually diminishing. . . .

[Our return to America being once more indefinitely postponed, we now took a house in Upper Grosvenor Street, close to Hyde Park, to which we removed from the Clarendon, my sister residing very near us, in Chapel Street, Grosvenor Square.]

26, *Upper Grosvenor Street, Wednesday, March 1st, 1843.*

Thank you, my dear T——, for your attention to our interests and affairs. . . . It seems to me that to have to accept the conviction of the unworthiness of those we love must be even worse than to lay our dearest in the earth, for we may believe that they have risen into the bosom of God. However, each human being's burden is the one whose weight must seem the heaviest to himself, and He alone who lays them on proportions them to our strength and enables us to walk upright beneath them. . . .

[Extract from a letter from Miss Sedgwick.]

New York, March 3rd, 1843.

The great topic with us just now is the trial of Mackenzie, of whom, as the chief actor in the tragedy of the "Somers," you must have heard. Some of your journals cry out upon him, but, as we think, only the organs of that hostile inhuman spirit that bad minds try to keep alive on both sides of the water. His life has been marked with courage and humanity; all enlightened and unperverted, I may say all sane opinion with us, is in his favour. After the most honourable opinion from the Court of Inquiry, he is now under trial by court-martial, demanded by his friends to save him from a civil suit. S——, the father of the Ohio mutineer, is a man of distinguished talent, of education, and head of the War Department, but a vindictive and unscrupulous man. He is using every means to ruin Mackenzie, to revenge the death of a son, Heaven-forsaken from the beginning of his days, and whose maturest acts (he died at nineteen)

were robbing his mother's jewel-case and stealing money from his father's desk. My nephew is acting as Mackenzie's counsel, and his wife, a Roman wife and mother, is a friend of mine. . . .

I heard a story the other day, "a true one," that I treasured for you as racy, as characteristic of slavery and human nature. A most notoriously atrocious, dissolute, *hellish* slave-owner died, and one of his slaves—an old woman—said to a lady, "Massa prayed God so to forgive him! Oh, how he prayed! And I am afraid God heard him; they say He's so good."

Upper Grosvenor Street, April 17th, 1843.

MY DEAR T——,

I have executed your commission with regard to two of the books you desired me to get, but the modern Italian work, published in 1840, in Florence, and the "Mariana" of 1600, I am very much afraid I shall not be able to procure; the first because it would be necessary to send to Florence for it, which could very easily be done, but then I shouldn't be here to receive it; and the second, the copy of "Mariana," of the edition you specify, because Bohn assures me that it is extremely rare, having been suppressed on account of the king-killing doctrines it inculcates, and the subsequent editions being all garbled and incorrect. As you particularly specified that of 1600, of course I would not take any other, and shall still make further attempts to procure that, though Panizzi, the librarian of the British Museum, and Macaulay, who are both friends of mine, and whom I consulted about it, neither of them gave me

much encouragement as to my eventual success. The "Filangieri" and Buchanan will arrive with me. I would send them to G—— A——, but that, as we return on the 4th of May, I think there is every reason to expect that we shall be in America first.

So much for your commission. With regard to your complaint that I give you nothing to do, I think you will have found that fault amended in my last communication, wherein I request you to accept my father's power of attorney, and undertake to watch over his interests in the New Orleans Bank. . . .

As for people's comments on me or my actions, I have not lived on the stage to be cowardly as well as bold; and being decidedly bold, "I thank God," as Audrey might say, that I am not cowardly, which is my only answer to the suggestion of "people saying," etc.

For a year and a half past I have been perfectly wretched at our protracted stay in Europe, and as often as possible have protested against our prolonged sojourn here, and all the consequences involved in it. This being the case, "people" attributing our remaining here to me troubles me but little, particularly as I foresaw from the first that that must inevitably be the result of our doing so.

I seldom read the newspapers, and therefore have not followed any of the details of this Mackenzie trial. The original transaction, and his own report of it, I read with amazement; more particularly the report, the framing and wording of which appeared to me utterly irreconcilable with the fact of his having written, as Lord Ashburton informed me, a very

pleasing book, of which certainly the style must have been very different. He, Lord Ashburton, spoke of him as though he knew him, and gave him the same character of gentleness and single-mindedness that you do.

Although our return to America will be made under circumstances of every possible annoyance and anxiety, it gives me heartfelt pleasure to think I shall soon see all my good friends there again, among whom you and yours are first in my regard. . . .

Butler Place is to be let, if possible, and at any rate we are certainly not to go back to it; whereat my poor little S—— cries bitterly, and I feel a tightening at the heart, to think that the only place which I have known as a *home* in America is not what I am to return to. . . . The transfer of that New Orleans stock by my father to me—I mean the law papers necessary for the purpose—cost £50 sterling. England is a dear country many ways.

Ellsler is in London now, and, I am assured by those who know, *diviner* than ever. I think her gone off both in looks and dancing. That rascal W—— has robbed her of the larger portion of her earnings. What a nice lover to have!

Believe me ever,

Yours most truly,

F. A. B.

[April 15th, 1843.

MY DEAREST HAL,

You must not scold if there are letters missing in my words this week, for I have enough to do and

to think of, as you well know, to put half the letters of the alphabet out of my head for the next twelve-month. . . .

Immediately after breakfast on Saturday I went down on my knees and packed, till Emily came to walk with me, and packed after I came in till it was time to go shopping and visiting. I went to bid the L——'s good-bye; we dined with the Procters, and had a pleasant dinner: Mr. and Mrs. Grote, Rogers, Browning, Harness and his sister. In the evening I went to Miss Berry's, where Lady Charlotte Lindsay and I discoursed about you, and she pitied you greatly for having, upon the top of all your troubles, forgotten your keys. . . .

Sunday morning, I packed instead of going to church, and, in fact, packed the blessed livelong day, with an interval of rest derived from an interminable visit from Frederick Byng (*alias* Poodle). Yesterday my father and Victoire (my aunt), and Adelaide and E—— (who, to my infinite joy, came home on Saturday), dined with us. My father was better, I think, than the last evening we were with him, though, of course, a good deal out of spirits. Victoire was pretty well, but quite surprised and mortified at hearing that I would not suffer her to pack my things, for fear of its fatiguing her; and told me how she had been turning in her mind her best way of contriving to be here packing all day, and home in Charlotte Street in time to give my father his dinner. She is Dall's own sister!

Yesterday I completed, with Emily's assistance (which nearly drove me mad) the packing of the

great huge chest of books, boxes, etc., and she and I walked together, but it was bitter cold and ungenial, regular *beasterly* wind. (Mrs. Grote says *she* invented that name for it, and, for reasons which will be obvious to you, I gave it up to her without a blow.) In the afternoon I went shopping with Adelaide, and then flew about, discharging my own commissions.

In the evening our "first grand party of the season came off;" nearly two hundred people came, and seemed, upon the whole, tolerably well amused. Adelaide and Miss Masson and I sang, and Benedict played, and it all went off very well. There were six policemen at the door, and Irish Jack-o'-lanterns without count; "the refreshment table was exceedingly elegantly set out" by *Gunter*—at a price which we do not yet know. . . .

I dread our sea-voyage for myself, for all sorts of physical reasons; morally, I dare say I shall benefit from a season of absolute quiet and the absence of all excitement. The chicks are well; they are to go down to Liverpool on Saturday, in order to be out of the way, for we leave this house on Monday, and their departure will facilitate the verifying of inventories and all the intolerable confusion of our last hours. Mrs. Cooper, as well as Miss Hall, will go with them to Liverpool, and I have requested that, instead of staying in the town, they may go down to Crosby Beach, six miles from it, and wait there for our arrival. This is all my history. I am in one perpetual bustle, and I thank Heaven for it; I have no leisure to think or to feel. . . .

I beg leave to inform you that Miss Hall came to

my party in a most elegant black satin dress, with her hair curled in *profuse ringlets* all over her head.

God bless you, my dear Hal. Good-bye.

Ever yours,

F. A. B.

Thursday, April 27th, 1843.

DEAREST HAL,

You ask how it goes with me. Why, I think pretty much as it did with the poor gentleman who went up in the flying machine t'other day, which, upon some of his tackle giving way, began, as he describes, to "turn round and round in the air, with the most frightful velocity." My condition, I think, too, will find the same climax as his, viz. falling in a state of *senselessness* into a steam-packet. If the account be true, it was a very curious one. As for me, I am absolutely breathless with things to do and things to think of. . . . Still, I get on (like a deeply freighted ship in a churning sea, to be sure), but I *do* make some way, and the days *do* go by, and I am glad to see the end of this season of trial approaching, for all our sakes.

Any one would suppose I was in great spirits, for I fly about, singing at the top of my voice, and only stop every now and then to pump up a sigh as big as the house, and clear my eyes of the tears that are blinding me. Occasionally, too, a feeling of my last moments here, and my leave-taking of my father and sister, shoots suddenly through my mind, and turns me dead sick; but all is well with me upon the whole, nevertheless.

Adelaide was in great health and spirits on Monday night, and sang for us, and seemed to enjoy herself very much, and gave great delight to everybody who heard her. She sang last night again at Chorley's, but I thought her voice sounded a little tired. To be sure, in those tiny boxes of rooms, the carpets and curtains choke one's voice back into one's throat, and it just comes out beyond one's teeth, with a sort of muffled-drum sound. Thus far, dearest Hal, yesterday. To-day, before I left my dressing-room, I got your present. Thank you a thousand times for the pretty chain [a beautiful gold chain, which, together with a very valuable watch, was stolen from me in a boarding-house in Philadelphia, almost immediately on my return there], which is exquisite, and will be very dear. Yet, though I found the "fine gold," the empty page of letter-paper on each side of it disappointed me more than it would have been grateful to express; but when I came down to breakfast I found your letter, and was altogether happy. . . . I was wearing my watch again, for I found the risk and inconvenience of always carrying it about very tiresome, but I had it on an old silver chain that I have had for some years. Yours is prettier even than my father's, and I love to feel it round my neck.

You say you hope my sister will be brave on the occasion of our parting, and not try my courage with her grief. I will answer for her. I am sure she will be brave. I know of no one with more determination and self-control than she has. . . .

The secret of helping people every way most efficiently is to stand by and be *quiet* and *ready* to

do anything you *may be asked to do*. This is the only real way to help people who have any notion of helping themselves.

On Monday evening we had our first party, which went off exceedingly well. On Tuesday morning Emily and I walked together, and I packed till lunch, after which I drove out with Adelaide, shopping for her, and doing my own *do's*. In the evening I went to my father, whom I found in most wretched spirits, but not worse in health. He has determined, I am thankful to say, not to see the children again before they go, which I think is very wise. After leaving him, I went to a party at our friend Chorley's, where dear Mendelssohn was, and where I heard some wonderful music, and read part of "Much Ado about Nothing" to them. Yesterday Emily came, and we walked together, and I packed and did commissions all day. Our second party took place in the evening, and we had all our grandee friends and fine-folk acquaintances. . . .

God bless you, dear Hal. Emily is waiting for me to go out walking with her.

Ever yours,
FANNY.

26, Upper Grosvenor Street.

MY DEAR CHARLES GREVILLE,

I send you back Channing's book, with many thanks. The controversial part of his sermons does not satisfy me. No controversy does; no arguments, whether for or against Christianity, ever appear to me *conclusive*; but as I am a person who would like

extremely to have it demonstrated *why* two and two make four, you can easily conceive that arguments upon any subject seldom seem perfectly satisfactory to me. As for my convictions, which are, I thank God, vivid and strong, I think they spring from a species of intuition, mercifully granted to those who have a natural incapacity for reasoning, *i.e.* the whole female *sect*. And, talking of them, I do not like Dryden, though I exclaim with delight at the glorious beauty and philosophical truth of some of his poetry ; but oh ! he has nasty notions about women. Did you ever see Correggio's picture of the Gismonda ? It is a wonderful portrait of grief. Even Guercino's "Hagar" is inferior to it in the mere expression of misery. Knowing no more of the story years ago than I gathered from a fine print of Correggio's picture, I wrote a rhapsody upon it, which I will show you some day.

The "Leaf and the Flower" is very gorgeous, but it does not touch the heart like earnest praise of a virtue, loved, felt, and practised ; and Dryden's "Hymns to Chastity" would scarcely, I think, satisfy me, even had I not in memory sundry sublime things of Spenser, Dante, and Milton on the same theme. Thank you for both the books. Each in its kind is very good.

I am yours very truly,

F. A. B.

[Mr. Greville had lent me a volume of Dr. Channing's "Sermons," and Dryden's "Fables," which I had never before read.]

26, Upper Grosvenor Street, Saturday, April 29th.

DEAREST GRANNY,

I send you back, with thanks, the critique on Adelaide. It is very civil and, I think, not otherwise than just, except perhaps in comparing my sister *at present* to Pasta.

If genius alone were the same thing as genius and years of study, labour, experience, and practice, genius would be a finer thing even than it is. My sister perpetually reminded me of Pasta, and, had she remained a few years longer in her profession, would, I think, have equalled her. I could not give her higher praise, for nobody, since the setting of that great artist, has even remotely reminded me of her. My sister's voice is not one of the finest I have heard; Miss Paton's is finer, Clara Novello's (the most perfect voice I ever heard) is finer. Adelaide's real voice is a high mezzo-soprano, and in *stretching* it to a higher pitch—that of the soprano-assoluto—which she has done with infinite pains and practice, in order to sing the music of the parts she plays, I think she has impaired the quality, the perfect intonation, of the notes that form the joint, the hinge, as it were, between the upper and middle voice; and these notes are sometimes not quite true—at any rate, weak and uncertain. In brilliancy of execution, I do not think she equals Sontag, Malibran, or Grisi; *but* there is in other respects no possible comparison, in my opinion, between them and herself, as a lyrical dramatic artist; and Pasta is the only great singer who, I think, compares with her in the qualities of that noble and commanding order which distinguished them both. In both

Madame Pasta and my sister, the dramatic power is so great as almost occasionally to throw their musical achievements, in some degree, into the shade. But in their lyrical declamation there is a grandeur and breadth of style, and a tragic depth of passion, far beyond that of any other musical performers I have known. In one respect Adelaide had the promise of greater excellence than Pasta—the versatility of her powers and her great talent for comedy.

How little her beautiful face was ever disfigured by her vocal efforts you have seen; and noted, I know, that power of appealing to Heaven, at once with her lustrous eyes and her soaring voice; ending those fine, exquisite, prolonged shakes on the highest notes, with that gentle quiver of the lids which hardly disturbed the expression of “the wrapt soul sitting in her eyes.” She has a musical sensibility which comprehends, in both senses of the word, every species of musical composition, and almost the whole lyrical literature of Europe; in short, she belongs, by organization and education, to the highest order of artists. But why—oh, why am I giving you a dissertation on her and her gifts, for a purpose which will never again challenge her efforts, or their exercise? (Quite lately, one who knew and loved her well, told me that Rossini had said of her, “To sing as she does three things are needed: this,”—touching his forehead,—“this” —touching his throat,—“and this”—laying his hand on his heart;—“she had them all.”)

I sometimes think, when I reflect upon the lives of theatrical artists, that they are altogether unnatural existences, and produce—pardon the bull—*artificial*

natures, which are misplaced anywhere but in their own unreal and make-believe sphere. They are the anomalous growth of our diseased civilizations, and, removed from their own factitious soil, flourish, I half believe, in none other. Do not laugh at me, but I really do think that creatures with the temperaments necessary for making good actors and actresses are unfit for anything else in life; and as for marrying and having children, I think crossing wholesome English farm stock with mythological cattle would furnish our fields with a less uncanny breed of animals.

I wish some laws were made, shutting up all the theatres, and only allowing two dramatic entertainments every year: one of Shakespeare's plays and one of Mozart's operas, at the cost of Government, and as a national festivity. Now, I know you think I am quite mad, wherefore adieu.

I am ever yours most truly,
F. A. B.

END OF VOL. II.







